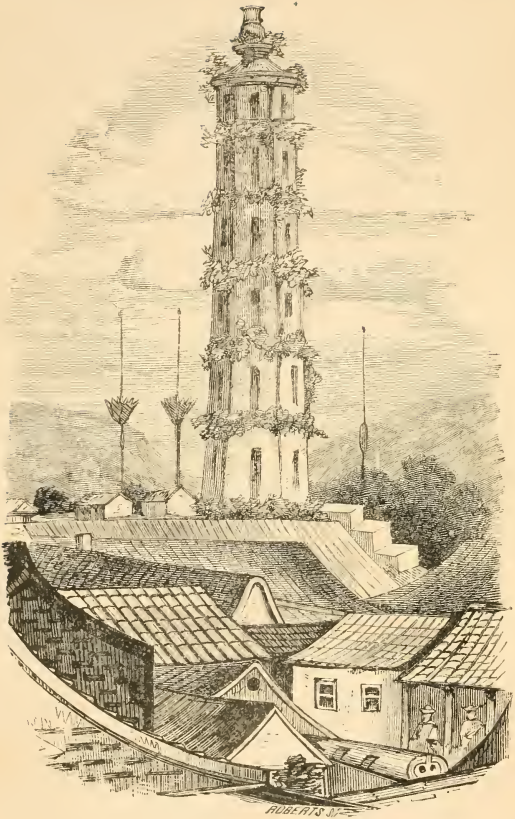
DARKNESS

IN THE

FLOWERY LAND.



THE TOWER OF NINGPO.

DARKNESS

IN THE

FLOWERY LAND;

OR,

RELIGIOUS NOTIONS AND POPULAR SUPERSTITIONS

IN

NORTH CHINA.

BY THE REV. M. SIMPSON CULBERTSON,

OF THE SHANGHAE MISSION OF THE BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

"Darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people."—Is. lx. 2.

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PREFACE.

The Flowery Central Country, or the Flowery Land, is a name often employed by the Chinese to designate their country. The name implies that they consider themselves the most polished of the nations. However polished they may be, the following pages will show that in religious matters, at least, they have no legitimate claim to be reckoned among the enlightened nations of the earth, but must be classed among those who are enveloped in thick darkness.

In the following work an attempt has been made to present the prominent features of the religion of the Chinese. In most of the numerous works on China which have heretofore appeared, this topic has been but briefly discussed. The subject presents

The sole object of the book is to promote the work of missions among the Chinese, by presenting such information as is calculated to awaken a deeper interest in their behalf among those whose duty it is to send them the Gospel, which alone can deliver them from their present bondage, and from eternal death.

M. S. C.

CHAMBERSBURG, PA.,
Sept. 7th, 1857.

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CHAPTER I.

NAMES OF CHINA—ITS EXTENT.

The country which is known among western nations by the name of China, is not so designated by its own inhabitants. The name of China is probably derived from the Tsin dynasty, which obtained sway over the whole country about two hundred and fifty years before Christ. The family which founded this dynasty had, for several hundred years, ruled over a portion of the country, and had long been illustrious on account of their warlike exploits.

The principality which they governed was

situated in the northwestern part of the empire, and, consequently, was the part first reached by persons coming to China from the west. This portion of the empire being known as the kingdom of Tsin or Chin, and having become famous through the character of the family which ruled over it, it was natural for foreign nations, having intercourse with it, to apply the name to the whole land of which it formed a part. Thus the empire became known among the western nations by the name Chin, or China.

The name by which the country is most commonly designated by the Chinese themselves is Chung Kwoh, "The Central Country," because they conceive of it as situated in the centre of the world, and all other countries as islands, or patches of territory, around its borders. The absurdity of such a view is less glaring than it otherwise appears, when we consider the inferiority of the neighboring nations, which alone, until recently, were known to the Chinese.

Another name which the Chinese are fond of using is "Hwa Kwoh"—"The Flowery Country," or "Hwa Chung Kwoh"—"The Flowery Central Country," because they regard themselves as more highly cultivated and polished than other nations. T'ien Hia—

All under Heaven; Sz' Hai—(All within the) Four Seas; Nui Ti—"The Inner Land," are terms frequently employed in speaking of the country, and are all indicative of the profound ignorance of geography which characterizes this people. In official documents the country is designated by the name of the reigning dynasty. At present, therefore, it is called "Ta Tsing Kwoh"—"The Country of the Great Pure Dynasty." The term "T'ien Chau"—"Celestial Dynasty," is sometimes used, but not in the sense in which foreigners have applied the term. It means the dynasty which derives authority from Heaven.

Among the most illustrious dynasties that have governed the empire, are the Hán and the T'áng. The people still love to consider themselves inheritors of their glory, and speak of themselves as *Hán-jin*—men of Han, or *T'áng-jin*—men of T'áng. They are often called too *Lí-min*—"*The black-haired people*," for black hair is as characteristic of the race as it is of our North American Indians.

The name China is properly applied only to that part of the empire known as "*the eighteen provinces*." This is the most fertile, most populous, and, in every respect, the most important portion of the empire. It is inhabited by a race essentially one, united in

sympathy, having for ages had the same historical associations, possessing the same written language, and speaking languages having a common origin, or rather different dialects of the same tongue. This country was conquered by the Manchu Tartars in the year 1644, and the reigning Emperors of China since that period have been members of the Manchu royal family by whom the conquest was effected. Manchuria is therefore at present a part of the Chinese empire, although the Manchus are a totally different race from the Chinese, and have a different language, both as written and as spoken. On the west of China also, are extensive territories which acknowledge the sway of the Emperor of China. They are inhabited by various distinct tribes, different from each other and from the Chinese. Among these possessions of the empire, Mongolia and Thibet are included.

The whole empire, according to McCulloch, is about 3,350 miles long from east to west, and about 2,100 miles broad from north to south. The extent of China proper is about 1,474 miles from north to south, and 1,355 from east to west. The whole empire contains probably about 5,300,000 square miles, and China proper about 1,400,000. The area

of China proper is not very different from that of the United States, exclusive of the territories, but the area of the whole empire is nearly twice as large as that of the entire territory belonging to the United States.

CHAPTER II.

POPULATION.

The population of this vast empire is stated at three hundred and sixty millions. This is according to a census taken by the Chinese government in the year 1812. There is no reason to doubt its correctness, except the apparent incredibility of the fact involved in it, that the Chinese empire contains one third of the entire population of the world. The census, however, seems to have been carefully taken, and it furnishes the best data we have for ascertaining the amount of the population. If we allow for even a small rate of increase, the number of souls now inhabiting this populous empire cannot be less than four hundred millions.* The mind cannot grasp the real

* By the documents discovered in the official residence of the governor in the city of Canton, when that city was entered by the English troops in October, 1856, it appears that a census was taken by the reigning Emperor in 1852, and

import of so vast a number. Four hundred millions! Think of it. What does it mean? Count it. Night and day, without rest, or food, or sleep, you continue the weary work, yet eleven days have passed before the first million is completed; and more than as many years before the end of the tedious task can be reached.

Or indulge another fancy. Suppose this mighty multitude to march in procession before you. Place them in single file, six feet apart, and let them march at the rate of thirty miles a day, stopping to rest on the Sabbath. Day after day you watch the moving column, and day after day the long, long march continues. The head of the procession pushes on far away towards the setting sun. Now bridge the Pacific; bridge the Atlantic. And now the Pacific is crossed, but still the long procession moves on, stretching away across high mountains, and sunny plains, and broad rivers, through China and India, and the European kingdoms; and on again over the stormy bosom of the Atlantic. But the circuit of the earth itself affords not standing-room. The endless column must double upon itself, and

that the population was then found to be three hundred and ninety-six millions.

double again and again; and shall girdle the earth eighteen times, before the great reservoir which furnishes these marvellous multitudes is exhausted. Weeks, and months, and years roll away, and still they come; men an women, and children. Since the march began, the little child has become a man, and yet on, on they come, in unfailing numbers. Not till the end of forty-one years will the last of that long procession have passed.

Any one living in China cannot fail to be deeply impressed by the evident density of the population. It appears in the great number of populous cities thickly scattered over the plains and valleys; in the number of large towns in the country surrounding those cities, and in the numerous villages and small hamlets which are everywhere visible to the passing traveller. Take, for example, the city of Ningpo, itself a large city of some three hundred thousand inhabitants. Within twelve miles we have the city of Chinhai, containing a population of twenty or twenty-five thousand. Funghwa, Tsz'ke, Yuyau, Tinghai are walled cities of about the same class with Chinhai, all within from twenty to fifty miles of Ningpo.

In the year 1855, two missionaries made a tour in the vicinity of Ningpo, in the course of

which they visited one city of 300,000, ten of from 50,000 to 100,000, and eight of from 10,000 to 20,000 inhabitants. They visited all these cities in travelling about seventeen days, at the slow rate of twenty miles a day; and were not at any time more than one hundred and fifty miles from Ningpo.

The district, or country, in which Shanghae is situated, is twenty-seven miles long, and twenty-six broad. It contains no less than thirty large populous towns and villages. About seventy miles from Shanghae lies the great city of Suchau, with a population of little less than two millions, while the whole country between and around these great centres of trade and commerce is full of large cities and flourishing towns. Twenty-seven miles from Shanghae is Sunkiáng, with a greater population than Shanghae. Not far off, we find Kiating, Kwánshan, and Nántsiáng, each claiming from sixty to one hundred thousand inhabitants. In the same region are the towns called Paushan, T'singpu, Chukiakoh, Kintsih, Wongdu, Chápu, and many others, each numbering from ten to twenty thousand inhabitants.

In the whole of the eighteen provinces there are one thousand seven hundred and twenty *hien* districts or townships, and it is far short

of the truth to say, that for each of these districts there is at least one city, with a population of from thirty thousand to one hundred thousand souls. But besides this, we must consider the large number of immense cities found in every province of the empire. There is Peking, with its three millions of people, Hangchau, and Canton, with a million or more each; while Wuchang and two neighboring cities, situate like New York, Brooklyn, and Jersey City, contain, together, four or five millions, and according to the French traveller M. Huc, eight millions. These are mentioned as being best known to foreigners, but many others, equally populous, might be named.

Now compare this with the United States. We can as yet boast of but two cities whose population reaches anything like half a million, and but seven others numbering over one hundred thousand. Exclusive of these there were in all the United States, in 1850, but twenty-seven towns having a population exceeding twenty thousand, and only thirty-nine others whose population reached ten thousand. In the State of New York there are but four cities of more than fifty thousand inhabitants, and but nine others of more than ten thousand. In Pennsylvania, besides its

two principal cities, there are but four towns of over ten thousand inhabitants.

But if we would form a just estimate of the populousness of China, we must not look at the large cities alone. In the country adjacent to these cities, there are many large unwalled towns, containing from one thousand to five or ten, or even twenty thousand inhabitants. Thus within ten miles of Ningpo, we have such towns as Chongsz', Chonggiau, Sz'-Kong, Ning-kong-giau, A'sahyin, Lodogiau, Ningpo-sz'-kung, Hápu, and others, having a population ranging from three to eighteen thousand. These are market towns, supported entirely by the local trade of the neighboring farmers. Farm-houses are not built separately, but in little hamlets, for the sake of mutual protection, and general convenience. These farming hamlets, often half concealed beneath the shade of a clump of trees, dot the face of the plain in every direction. In any spot in which you can place yourself, they are ever near you, on the right hand and on the left; and in whichever direction you look, your eye rests upon some of their inhabitants working in their fields, or carrying home their produce, or returning from the nearest market village, bearing, on poles slung across their shoulders, such necessaries as they have pur-

chased for family use. Thus, wherever you are, the scenes of busy life surround you. You cannot find a spot where you can feel that you are alone. When you wish a place that can be truly called solitary, you must seek it far away among the mountains.

Such is China. Everywhere you see around you the abodes of the living, and the tombs of the dead. This populous country might be the richest and most powerful on earth. Its soil is fertile. It abounds in large rivers, and navigable canals. Its people are shrewd, observant, intelligent. Yet the nation is poor and feeble, and the mass of the people sunk in deep moral degradation. Why is this? We shall see, as we take a nearer survey of these busy multitudes, that their poverty, degradation, and comparative destitution of the blessings of modern civilization, are to be traced to the fact that they are without the Bible.

CHAPTER III.

RELIGIONS OF CHINA—FOLLOWERS OF CONFUCIUS.

What now are the religious views of these countless multitudes? What their prospects for the world to come? Alas! they are "sitting in darkness, and in the region and shadow of death." Whence came we? Whither are we going? How may a man be just with God? These are questions on which all the wisdom of their sages and philosophers, employed upon them for thousands of years, have not been able to shed any light. Thinking themselves wise, they have become fools. Their feet "stumble upon the dark mountains." While they "looked for light, it has been turned into the shadow of death, and has been made gross darkness."

All the scholars and learned men of China consider themselves as belonging to what is called the *jü-kiáu*—the sect of the literati.

This is not, strictly speaking, a religious sect. The term is used to designate the followers of Confucius and his disciples, and of the sages who preceded him. All the Chinese, however, learned and unlearned, rank themselves among the followers of Confucius. Those who are more strict take pride in professing to reject the dogmas of the Buddhists and Tauists, which are received in whole or in part, by the mass of the unlearned. Even the most rigid of the Confucianists, however, are willing occasionally to call in the aid of the Buddhist or Tauist priest, to quiet their fears, or comfort their families in distress.

The veneration of the Chinese for Confucius is very great. He is never called a god, but the inscriptions suspended about the temples dedicated to his memory, lavish upon him the most extravagant praises, and he is frequently spoken of in terms which should never be applied to any mere man. One inscription in the temple at Ningpo, declares that he is "worthy to rank as one comparable with heaven and earth." Probably no other uninspired man ever wielded an influence so powerful, so enduring, or reaching so vast a multitude of minds. Confucius was, no doubt, a wise man, and a man of probity. He labored for the promotion of general morality,

and the best interests of his country. He taught principles of morality as nearly correct as any other heathen philosopher ever taught, and there is a great deal in his teachings to admire. The study of the sayings of Confucius, as reported by his disciples, must lead to a feeling of respect for the man; but they, at the same time, give rise to a deep impression of the utter inability of the human mind, without a revelation, to solve the mysteries of our existence, or to find the true foundations of genuine morality.

Confucius, however, is not to be regarded as the founder of a new sect. He merely expounded and enforced the maxims which, he contended, had ever been acted upon by the ancient sages, and by the wise and good of every age. His system is rather a system of ethics and political economy, than of religion. His political maxims commend themselves to common sense, reason, and justice, and have exerted a happy influence on the government and people of China.

The foundation of his moral system is obedience to parents, and love to brethren. From these flow respect for the aged, for magistrates, and for all superiors; then courtesy and friendship among equals, and kindness toward inferiors. Thus we may say that the duties

enjoined in the fifth commandment are the foundation of the Confucian code. May not the respect which the Chinese have always paid to this commandment account, in part, for their long continuance as a nation? A blessing always attends obedience to the laws of God, even when rendered by idolaters.

One of the sayings of Confucius is remarkable, from its resemblance to our Saviour's golden rule. Confucius said, "Do not to others what you would not have others do to you." But the rule which Christ lays down for our guidance is, "Do to others as you would have others do to you." The resemblance is such as does honor to the heathen sage, and yet the difference is almost as great as that between heathenism and Christianity. To abstain from doing evil is a very different thing from active efforts to do good. The rule of Christ would lead his followers to send the gospel to the heathen. That of Confucius, too generally acted on in the world, even by good men, would permit us to leave the heathen to perish.

Confucius and his followers have made two great and fundamental mistakes. One is, that man's heart is originally pure, and that he may attain perfection, by simply following out the impulses of this sinless heart. The

book which is put into the hands of every Chinese boy, when he first goes to school, begins with declaring this doctrine. Its very first sentence is, *Jin chí tsu, sing pun shen.* "At man's birth, his heart is radically good." A man having lost this good heart, must regain it by his own efforts.

The other fundamental error of this system consists in leaving entirely out of view the world to come. Confucius enforced his maxims and exhortations by considerations drawn only from the advantages to be obtained in the present life. He taught, indeed, that men should be careful of their thoughts, and of the feelings they cherished in their hearts, if they wished to be truly virtuous, but he said nothing of the rewards or punishments of another world. In this, perhaps, he acted wisely. He knew nothing of the state beyond the grave, and, therefore, he did well to say nothing about it. But he cannot be excused for not referring more distinctly to the will of God as a reason for the practice of virtue. His ideas of God were doubtless very vague and indefinite, yet he believed and taught that there is a power above that controls the affairs of men. He would often say, when his plans were thwarted, "Such is the will of Heaven." We cannot

with certainty infer from this, however, that he had any conception of one great personal Being, upholding all things by the word of his power, and controlling, with absolute sway, all events.

We have no proof that Confucius was a worshipper of images, but he must, nevertheless, be regarded as an idolater. He worshipped the creature, not the Creator. He strictly enjoined the observance of the appropriate sacrifices to heaven and earth, to the gods of the land and grain, and to ancestors. He was, nevertheless, of opinion that men might pay too much attention to religious worship, and he guarded his disciples against this, telling them to "reverence the gods, but avoid too much familiarity with them."

Confucius was born about 550 years before Christ, and he lived to be seventy-three years of age. About one hundred years after him, Mencius flourished. He also is held in high repute by the Chinese, and his writings are as generally studied as are those of Confucius, although he occupied a secondary rank. He enforced the doctrines of Confucius, and acknowledged him as his master; but was not inferior to him, either in moral character or intellectual power.

The descendants of Confucius, though he

himself had but one son, are still found in the province of Shantung, in considerable numbers. By the Chinese these sages are called Kung futsz, and Mangtsz, or Mang futsz. Futsz is not a part of the name, but a title, meaning "teacher." These names were Latinized, by the Jesuit missionaries, into Confucius and Mencius.

About seventeen hundred years after Confucius, or nearly seven hundred years ago, the philosopher Chu Hi wrote elaborate and elegant commentaries on the works of Confucius and his disciples. These commentaries are regarded as of the highest authority, and Confucius is generally understood as Chu Hi interprets him. In his hands Confucianism becomes pantheism, and that of a kind which, in effect, is sheer atheism. He went far beyond Confucius, for he altogether doubted the existence of the gods, and seems to have thought it a subject hardly worth talking about. He thought he could solve all the mysteries of existence, without those useless beings. All things, he thought, originated with the T'ai Kih—"The Great Extreme," which resolved itself into the Yin and the Yang, or the dual powers, and thus generated the world.

CHAPTER IV.

THE STATE RELIGION.

In the ancient Chinese classics, a great deal is said about the god Shangti. He is often spoken of in terms which cannot properly be applied to any other than the true God. Some have been led to believe that this is none other than Jehovah, the God of the Bible, and that therefore the Chinese must not even now be regarded as destitute of the knowledge of the true God. But we find in the sacred books of the Hindus descriptions of Bramah more sublime than anything in the Chinese classics in reference to Shangti. We do not believe, however, that by Bramah the Hindus mean the true God. Besides, there is a great deal said about Shangti that seems to refer to the visible heavens, and much, too, that indicates very indefinite notions of the Power or Being indicated by the term. It seems to have been often employed merely as

a designation of the power or operation manifested in the various changes going on in the works of nature. Shangti is not spoken of as self-existent—almighty, or as the creator of the world. Even in those early ages, therefore, the Chinese seem to have "forgotten God," and again "corrupted their way upon the earth." But it is true that they had not then gone so far astray, or separated so far from God, as they have since. Their most ancient work, called the Shu-king, or Book of Records, carries us back to the days of Yau and Shun, while Noah was still living. That the men of that day had some knowledge of the true God is of course very probable, but their descendants seem to have rapidly degenerated.

They did not at that time worship idols. They worshiped the works of nature however, and imaginary divinities, without the aid of images. Similar rites are still observed, and many of the services prescribed by the state religion are performed without any worship of idols. The state, however, does not connect itself with religion in any such way as to prescribe religious rites to the *people*. Every variety of religious opinion is tolerated which is not regarded as dangerous in its political influence. The religious ceremonies prescribed by the state are for the emperor,

and for the officers, in every part of the empire, employed in his service.

The Emperor himself is the great high priest of the nation, and as such is expected to attend to those religious observances which have been sanctioned by the usage of his predecessors.

The temples at Peking, where the Emperor and his court engage in their public devotions, are on an extensive scale. In and around the imperial city there are altars to Heaven, to Earth, to the gods of the land and grain, to the Sun and Moon, and to the North Star. The altar to Heaven, called the *T'ien tan*—is in the southern portion of the city, in an inclosure three miles in circumference. The altar itself is a large round mound of earth, thirty feet high. It is divided into three parts, each ten feet high. The lower one is one hundred and twenty feet, the second ninety feet, and the third sixty feet in diameter. Near it is the "Palace of Abstinence," in which the Emperor prepares himself for the great sacrifice to Heaven at the winter solstice, by fasting for three days. To fasting must be added change of garments, careful ablutions, and abstinence from scenes of pleasure, and from whatever can defile, as preparatory to these important services.

The services at the altar of the Earth are performed at the vernal equinox, when the approach of spring causes the fruits of the earth to spring up. The altar to the *Shié-Tsih*, or gods of the land and grain, is square, and only ten feet high, being divided into two stories of five feet each. Each side of the square measures fifty-eight feet. The Emperor alone has the privilege of worshiping at this altar, and it is not lawful to erect a similar one in any part of the empire for the use of any of his subjects, however exalted in station. No one but the Emperor can presume to perform any of the great sacrifices. It is his special prerogative, as the high priest of his people, to offer these sacrifices to High Heaven, whose vicegerent he is. No subject of the "Son of Heaven," must presume to imitate the acts of adoration with which he honors Shangti, the Great Ruler on High. Banishment, blows, or death await the presumptuous subject who should dare thus to insult His Majesty's imperial dignity.

These sacrifices are, strictly speaking, merely offerings. They are not burnt on the altar, and are not looked upon as making atonement for sin; but merely as expressions of reverence and gratitude. They consist of animals previously slain, wine, fruits, silks,

and other articles, which are held up by the offerer while on his knees before the shrine, and then placed for a short time upon the the altar.

The following is one of the prayers used by the Emperor on these occasions.* "To thee, O mysterious worker, I look up in thought. How imperial is the expansive arch where thou dwellest. Now is the time when the masculine energies of nature begin to be displayed, and with the great ceremonies I reverently honor thee. Thy servant is but a reed or a willow; my heart is but as that of an ant. Yet have I received thy favoring decree appointing me to the government of the empire. I deeply cherish a sense of my ignorance and blindness, and am afraid lest I prove unworthy of thy great favors. Therefore will I observe all the rules and statutes, striving, insignificant as I am, to discharge my loyal duty. Far distant here I look up to thy heavenly palace. Come in thy precious chariot to the altar. Thy servant bows his head to the earth, reverently expecting thine abundant grace. All my officers are here arranged along with me, joyfully worshiping before

* *Vide* Statutes of the Ming Dynasty, as quoted by Dr. Legge in "Notions of the Chinese concerning God and Spirits."

thee. All the gods accompany thee as guards (filling the air), from the east to the west. Thy servant prostrates himself to meet thee, and reverently looks up for thy coming, O Ruler."

The sacrifices at which the Emperor officiates are divided into three grades. In the first grade but four objects of worship are admitted. These are Heaven and Earth, the Imperial Ancestors, and the gods of the land and grain. The second grade of sacrifices are offered to the Sun, the Moon, the spirits of emperors of former dynasties, Confucius, the god of the passing year, of agriculture, of silk weaving, the gods of heaven, and the gods of the earth. The third grade includes all the inferior objects of worship—the spirits of ancient sages and heroes, the north pole, clouds, rain, wind, thunder, seas, rivers, mountains, and many other objects.

The question has often been discussed whether, in offering sacrifices to Heaven and Earth, it is the visible heavens, and the material earth that the Chinese worship. The truth, no doubt, is this. All idolaters, from a papal archbishop to the most besotted heathen, will tell you that they are not fools enough to pray to a senseless image. It is not the image, but the god represented by the

image, and residing in it, that they worship. The large Chinese idols are generally hollow, and have a little hole in the back, to enable the god to pass in and out when he pleases. So no doubt the Emperor would say that, when he worships Heaven, he looks beyond the blue expanse to the Power that rules in heaven; and that when he prays to the Earth, he means the Power that manifests itself in the various operations of nature going on in the earth. The Bible however does not admit of any such distinction, and declares positively that it is the idol itself that the idolater worships, since there is no such spiritual being as he conceives of, in existence. So the Chinese must be regarded as worshiping the material heavens and earth. They thus provoke the anger of God as really as they do when worshiping images.

When the Emperor worships Heaven he arrays himself in blue robes, and in yellow when he worships the Earth, in accordance with the color of the object to which the sacrifice is offered. So when he worships the Sun he wears red robes, and when worshiping the Moon he is dressed in white.

The following is a prayer addressed to the Sun: "The inheriting Emperor seriously makes a notification to the god of the Great

Light. Thou, god, art the chief of the masculine essences, the head of the gods. Thy light shines down on this lower world, and nothing within the four ends of heaven is hid from it. From ancient days thy meritorious services have been continued to the present time. The whole earth looks up and depends on thee. Now it is the second month of spring. In accordance with the ancient statutes, with gems, silks, and animals, I respectfully offer a sacrifice to thee, O god, and bowing, desire thee to regard and accept it, and to give happiness to all the people. Mayest thou enjoy this."*

Besides the regular services at the appointed times, prayers and ceremonies adapted to existing exigencies, are employed on special occasions. Thus, in the Peking Gazette, of the 10th March, 1853, the Emperor announces his intention of offering special prayer in view of the progress made by the rebels. Listen to His Majesty's language.

"In the first decade of the present moon," he says, "when the prayer for grain and the great sacrifices are offered, We intend to proceed in person to the front of the altar, and after a night of watching and fasting, reverent-

* *Vide* Legge's "Notions of the Chinese concerning God and Spirits."

ly to offer up our heartfelt supplications that our people may enjoy repose, and perpetually cease from war and strife." Then, after detailing the successes of the rebels, he proceeds: "We, reflecting upon the distresses of our subjects, some of whom have no means of obtaining a livelihood, have again and again examined into and blamed ourselves, which seems after all but empty ceremony; I am therefore filled with apprehension, and humbly entreat August Heaven to pardon my offences and save my poor people."

It is to be observed that when addressing "August Heaven" the Emperor uses the singular pronouns, *I* and *my*, instead of the plural *we* and *our*. In such prayers as this the heathen show the law of God "written on their hearts," and demonstrate that their idolatry is justly held to be, as the Apostle Paul says, "without excuse." At the same time it must be admitted that the conduct of the heathen prince puts to shame many kings and rulers who call themselves Christian.

CHAPTER V.

WORSHIP OF CONFUCIUS.

The Emperor officiates at the great sacrifices as the representative of his people, and offers his prayers in their stead. So also the magistrates, throughout all the provinces and departments of the empire, are required to perform certain religious ceremonies in behalf of the people whom they govern. In the second and eighth months of each year, religious rites are observed in honor of Confucius. In every district, and every department, there is a temple erected for the worship of the sage. In Ningpo there are two such temples; one for the *fu* (foo), or department, and the other for the *hien*, or district, of which it is the capital city. They are both large and expensive structures, covering a large area of valuable land.

The Fu temple is the larger and more elegant of the two. It is in a large inclosure

containing a number of buildings, the whole surrounded by a high brick wall. The great double gate of the inclosure is designed for the Emperor; and as he never visits Ningpo, this gate is never opened. A smaller side door is the common entrance. This conducts us through a narrow lane to another door opening into one of the temple courts. Over it is an inscription of four characters: *Lí mun, í lu;* meaning, "The door of propriety, and road of righteousness." Passing on a short distance, another large gate introduces us to a long court, in which is a pool of water. The sides of the pool are walled up with stone, and it is spanned by three bridges of heavy stone slabs. Crossing the pool, we enter the main court, most of which is paved with stone. There are buildings on each of the four sides of the square. The main temple is placed on a mound, elevated two or three feet above the rest of the court. To this platform we ascend, not by steps, but by a heavy slanting stone, the face of which is made rough by carved figures of dragons.

The building, externally, presents nothing very striking; but the hall within, which embraces the whole area of the building, is richly ornamented. The floor is of stone. The roof is supported by immense wooden columns,

and the timbers near the roof are covered with small landscape paintings, executed in the best style of Chinese art. There is no ceiling. The shrines, the tablets, the tables and utensils, are covered with dust. Spiders have woven their webs in the nooks and corners, and the unswept floor bespeaks neglect. The busy street is not far off, but here silence reigns. The general desolation is in strange contrast with the gaudy ornaments displayed in such profusion on the higher timbers of the hall. Without, the avenue from the great gate of state is overgrown with weeds, and the stately old trees, now going to decay, point us back to former generations.

This differs from other temples, in that it contains no idols. Confucius, and his most distinguished disciples, who are here worshiped, are present only by their "spirit-tablets." These are nothing but small pieces of board, neatly varnished, and each inscribed with the name and title of the sage it represents. They are inserted into little wooden pedestals, so as to stand upright in their place. In some of the smaller temples of Confucius a large image of him occupies the place of the tablet.

The offerings presented to Confucius consist of animals, silk, wine, and vegetables. It has been estimated that there are 1,560 temples

to Confucius, and that there are annually offered to him and his associates some sixty-two thousand hogs, rabbits, sheep, and deer, and twenty-seven thousand pieces of silk. These offerings are presented very early in the morning, generally before daylight. This is true, also, of the other religious services performed by the magistrates, not excepting those in which the Emperor himself bears the chief part.

In the year 1853, the time for the Confucian offerings fell on the 7th of September. On that occasion, the writer repaired to the temple of Confucius in Shanghae, at four o'clock in the morning. Attendants were there preparing for the worshipers—the principal one being the Táu-tai, or Intendant of Circuit, who is the chief magistrate of the three departments of Su, Sung, and Tai, and the highest officer residing in the city. In front of the great tablet of Confucius, and a little to the right, we see the carcass of a large ox, placed upon a rack, its feet dangling on either side, its head tied up in the natural position, and facing towards the altar. It had been slaughtered the day before, and the skin being wholly removed, it was a repulsive object. On the left, a pig and a goat are placed in a similar position. On the right and left of the

hall are tablets of some of the disciples of Confucius, before which are placed the carcasses of a pig and a goat. In front of the altar a small piece of carpeting is spread on the floor, indicating the spot where the chief worshiper is to kneel. The altar is nothing but a long, narrow table, curved upward at the ends, and painted red. Its only covering is a covering of dust.

A little before five o'clock, the Hioh-Kwan —the literary officer in charge of the temple— is announced. He is preceded by two musicians—one tapping a small drum, the other playing on a flute. In front of the door, in the court, he stops. An attendant cries out to him in a loud voice, and he drops on his knees. Then the word is given to "knock head," and the worshiper strikes the ground three times with his forehead, and rises to his feet. This ceremony is three times repeated, and the worshiper now enters the main hall, followed by his attendants, and kneels on a cushion before the central tablet, that of Confucius. An attendant kneels on his right hand, and another on his left. Another attendant now, with solemn mien, approaches the dusty altar, and takes from it a small open box, containing an envelope like those used in China for letters of great officers, more than a

foot in length. This contains the silk. During all this time the tapping of the drum, and the shrill sound of the flute, resound through the hall, and every movement throughout the service is at the word of command from the master of ceremonies. The envelope containing the silk is handed to the attendant kneeling on the left, who passes it to the worshiper. He receives it with both hands, holds it up a moment as high as his forehead, hands it to the attendant kneeling on his right, who in turn passes it to another, and it is thereupon duly placed on the altar. The same ceremonies are performed with a small censer, and then the whole is repeated before each tablet in the hall.

The party then retires for a moment to the court, and on re-entering the hall they kneel before a table, on which stands a small frame containing a written paper. This is handed to the attendant on the left, who reads it off in a loud singing tone. Its purport is to set forth the praises of Confucius as the sage to whom no mortal can be compared, and to announce that the worship is performed in behalf of the people of the district of Shanghae, in the department of Sungkiang. When read, the writing is again placed on the table. After some further ceremonies,. the worshiping offi-

cer passes into the court, and kneels before the door. At the same time the envelope containing the silk, the written tablet, and some paper mock money, put up in imitation of silver bullion, are placed on an iron rack and burnt. This ends the ceremony.

It is now time for the Táu-tai and his suite to arrive, and the hall is prepared for his reception. He is expected to go through with the ceremonies just described. But on this occasion he has more important business to attend to. One of his colleagues, instead of worshiping Confucius, has fallen under the sword of rebel banditti, and his soul is called to stand before his God. The Táu-tai's life too is in danger, and he must devise means to save it. While the temple attendants were waiting his arrival in the temple, the announcement was made that the Chi-hien had just been murdered, and that the city was in the hands of the rebels. The ox and the pigs and the goats, which would have feasted the literati, were no doubt seized by the rebel chiefs for their own behoof.*

It is in this manner that Confucius is wor-

* These rebels, who held possession of Shanghae about eighteen months, as also those who so long held the country around the city of Canton, must not be confounded with the Tae-ping insurgents, whose seat is at Nanking. There was no connection whatever between these rebel bands.

shiped, on the same day, throughout all the districts of China. If you ask the worshipers how it is that the spirit of the sage can be present at the same moment in so many different places, they have no reply to make. Such questions are too profound for them, and this is a matter with which they have nothing to do. "Such is our custom" is a sufficient answer to all objections.

All the officers, civil and military, are expected to take part in this ceremony, kneeling in the order of their rank, the civil officers on the east, the military on the west side of the avenue leading to the shrine.

CHAPTER VI.

RELIGIOUS RITES PERFORMED BY MAGISTRATES.

In every department and district there is a temple dedicated to its presiding deity. This is a kind of spiritual officer, governing spiritual affairs, corresponding to the civil officers presiding over the affairs of this lower world. These are the tutelar gods of the districts, and of the cities in which their temples are situated. In Ningpo, as in the case of the temples of Confucius, there are two temples of this kind. They are called *Ching-hwáng miáu*, or "temples of the city wall and ditch."

The "*Ching-hwáng*" temple at Shanghae occupies extensive grounds, and is composed of numerous buildings. The grounds are decorated, according to the highest style of Chinese elegance, with artificial lakes and islands, winding-bridges, grottoes, and rock-work in imitation of mountain scenery. Large trees afford a grateful relief from the summer heat;

airy arbors are perched upon the miniature crags; and shrubs and flowers spring up among the rocks. These scenes of beauty, however, are not so enchanting as to throw around the beholder a spell sufficiently powerful to make him forget or overlook the repulsive sights, and unsavory odors, caused by the receptacles of filth with which the place has been defiled.

In the centre of the lake is a fine looking building of two stories, called the "*Hu-sing ting*," or "Lake's Heart Hall." It is connected with the shore by a light bridge, called the "*bridge of nine windings.*" In various directions, tea-shops are seen, in which you may slake your thirst with a cup of hot tea, for three cash, or one-fifth of a cent. They are crowded with loungers, sitting around the tables sipping tea, and at the same time learning the news, retailing gossip, settling business transactions, or it may be gambling. The temple buildings too, with commendable economy, have been turned to good account. Most of the lower front rooms are occupied as stores for the sale of all kinds of goods and wares. The place being a great thoroughfare, always crowded, these rooms are in great demand. The whole scene is like a busy fair. At the corners are fortune-tellers at their

tables, or perhaps, seated on the ground, with all the paraphernalia of the occult art spread out on a cloth before them. Here is a juggler performing his magic wonders in the midst of a circle of astonished spectators. There is a mountebank, with his head concealed behind a curtain, carrying on a mock theatre, by means of Lilliputian figures skillfully displayed above the curtain. Here may be seen a vender of candies—there, a walking eating establishment, provoking the appetite by the odor of smoking viands. Very often, too, the main court of the temple is filled with a dense mass of men and women, boys and girls, intently watching the progress of a theatrical exhibition.

Such are the scenes most frequently exhibited in this temple. The magistrates, however, on the first and fifteenth of each month, repair at early dawn to the temple, to perform their devotions. They also worship here at the summer and winter solstices, and at the spring and autumn terms. Here, too, they read to the people the maxims of the "*Sacred Edict*," at the time of the semi-monthly worship. This is a work composed by the Emperor Kánghí, and his successor Yung-ching, nearly two hundred years ago. It contains sundry exhortations on the cultivation of vir-

tue, and attention to the duties of the social relations.

The Viceroy of Nanking, I. Liang, in a memorial to the Emperor, gives an account of a remarkable instance of the protecting power of one of these deities of the city wall and ditch. On the 9th September, 1853, the city of Paúshán, near Shanghae, was taken by a band of rebels. One of the subordinate officers of the place collected the literary men and gentlemen of the neighborhood, in order to recover the city. Before they commenced operations, there was suddenly seen on the city walls a bright red light, which issued forth from the *Ching-hwáng* temple. At the same instant, spirits were seen walking to and fro, and beckoning the attacking party to advance. The courage of the rebels at once forsook them, and the imperialists conquered at one beat of the gong. The memorial giving this account concludes with a request that the Emperor be pleased to grant a new title to the god, as a reward for his services.

The annual ceremony of "welcoming the Spring," with which is connected that of ploughing, is also attended with idolatrous services, in which the magistrates are required to take part. This ceremony has been observed for many ages, and occurs near the

opening of the year. At Peking, the Emperor himself is the principal actor. In the smaller cities, the Prefects and District Magistrates perform the chief part.

At Ningpo, a large clay figure of an ox is made, which is worshiped by the mandarins. They worship at a temple outside of the city, and when this ceremony is concluded, the Prefect ploughs a small piece of ground. The next day the officers assemble at another temple, to which the ox has been brought, and there, after offering up prayers, form a procession, and march around the ox. Each officer is provided with a bundle of twigs, with which, at signals from the master of ceremonies, he strikes the effigy. At length the Prefect strikes it on the head, and in an instant the crowd rush in and tear the ox to pieces, each anxious to procure a fragment to mingle with his seed-corn, that he may have a more abundant crop.

At Shanghae the ceremony occurred in 1853, on the 3d of February. As described by an eye-witness, the ox was made of paper, pasted on a frame of bamboo. The paper was of different colors, varying according to rules which have been handed down from former generations, and determined by the number of the year in the cycle. The pro-

portion and arrangement of these colors is supposed to afford some indication of the character of the ensuing year. Thus, when black predominates, a year of sickness may be expected. Heavy rains and floods are indicated by white, strong winds and hurricanes by blue, and fires by red. Yellow is the color which indicates the productiveness of the coming season, and when this color predominates, there is great rejoicing among the farmers. On this occasion (1853) nearly the whole of the ox was of this color. The head, horns, feet, and tail were of black, the neck and belly of blue, the legs white, and the rest yellow. It turned out to be a year of terrible suffering to the people of Shanghae, for in that year the city was seized by a band of rebels, and held for eighteen months.

The ox was carried to the "Welcoming Spring" temple, about half a mile outside the south gate. The god presiding over the year was also taken from his place in the "Ching-hwáng" temple, and carried in a sedan chair to the "Welcoming Spring" temple, where he was placed by the side of the ox. This god is called "Ta-suy"—"Great Year." The Chinese cycle consists of sixty years, and each year has a god specially appointed to take charge of it. He is a kind of President, con-

tinued in office one year, and his turn to rule comes round once in sixty years. The idol represents a little boy, and his attire varies from year to year. Its color, like that of the ox, has a significance attached to it by which the character of the coming year may be known. On this occasion the image was bare-headed, and the inference was that the season would be cold. The interpretation attached to this idol's dress is just the opposite of what would be the most natural one, or the one which is adopted in all other cases. On the left of Ta-suy a large sheet of blank yellow paper represented the reigning Emperor Hienfung.

And now comes the procession. First, is a small junk, decked with flags, representing one of the Emperor's tribute grain junks, for carrying rice to the capital. This is followed by a beggar dressed in the uniform of a great mandarin. Then come some coarsely dressed men, representing the farmers. After them come eight hideous looking fellows, with fantastic dress and painted faces, representing genii; and then are men bearing miniature sign-boards, representing the various trades. But the most important portion of the procession are the five mandarins, in their rich court-

dresses, by whom the ceremonies are to be performed.

These officers performed the prescribed prostrations and genuflexions, and then the procession was again formed, the ox and idols now constituting a part of it, and all proceeded to the office of the District Magistrate, within the city. There the ox was beaten to pieces in the usual manner, and the people scrambled for the seeds of rice, cotton, wheat, beans, and other articles, which had previously been placed within the body.

Many are the renowned heroes of ancient and modern times who have been deified. Among these is the god Kwánti, the god of war. He figured as a military leader in the time of the "Three States," in the second and third centuries of the Christian era. He is now much worshiped, and many splendid and costly temples have been erected in his honor. In the recent troubles in China he is represented as having, on several occasions, borne a conspicuous part. He is said to have spoken, more than once, through the medium of inspired persons, declaring that the calamities caused by the civil wars are all owing to the vices of the people, and their neglect of the rites in honor of the gods.

He has also, it is declared, interfered more actively in the struggle. In the month of July, 1853, the city of Kaifung, in the province of Honan, was besieged by the rebels, and would have been taken, but for the interposition of Kwánti. The interposition consisted in a heavy rain, by which the yellow river was suddenly raised to such an extent as to reach the rebel camp and destroy their powder. The Imperialists embraced the opportunity to attack them. The terrified rebels fled in disorder, and hundreds of them were drowned in attempting to cross the river.

In view of this manifestation of the power of Kwánti, the high Imperialist officers at once sent up a memorial to the Emperor, begging that a votive tablet might be erected in his temples, and that an additional title should be conferred upon him. The matter was duly referred to the Imperial Academy and the Board of Rites, who recommended that the god should be transferred from the list of those entitled to the third, to that of those entitled to the second order of sacrifices; and further, that in all his temples he should be honored with the same ceremonies that are accorded to Confucius. The titles previously granted to this deity were such as "The Efficacious Protector;" "The Benevolent and Brave;" "The

Dignified and Exalted;" "Defender of the Country."

The Board of Revenue, desirous of obtaining some pecuniary advantage from the honors conferred on their champion, devised a new order of honor, the members of which were to have the sole right of performing the newly prescribed ceremonies, and the privilege of wearing a brass knob on their caps. Admission to this order was to be purchased for the sum of fifty-four taels of silver, or about seventy-five dollars.

A very recent instance of the exercise of this power of deification on the part of the Emperor is that of General Chin Hwáching. This officer commanded the Chinese forces when the English troops attacked the batteries at the mouth of the Wusung River, during their advance against Shanghae, on the 16th of June, 1842. He courageously defended his position, and refused to retreat, while others were fleeing on all sides, and when further resistance was hopeless. He fell pierced with wounds on the walls of the fort, to the last opposing the enemy, even after they had effected an entrance. His imperial master decreed the highest honors to his memory, and, by his order, a temple has been erected for him in Shanghae, in which the magistrates perform

religious services before his image. In a notice of him, published after his death, it is stated that Chin sent down word from heaven, that he had been appointed by the Heavenly Ruler on High to the rank of second general of the Board of Thunder, in which capacity he hoped still to render some service to his country, and in some measure repay the favor of his Imperial Majesty.

In his temple, at Shanghae, a number of inscriptions in large characters are suspended upon the walls. The following are specimens:

"His courage was great as the hills and the rivers."

"His name is spread abroad through the central and the outer lands."

"In his temple he shall eat the sacrifices of a thousand autumns."

"In his dream he slept on his carved spear. Having devoted himself to his country, he regarded not his advanced age."

"His soul was wrapped in the horse's skin (*i. e.*, he died in battle).

"His Excellency is to be much lamented, but his features shall ever be remembered as though he were still living."

In Ningpo there is a temple of a similar character, in honor of a Prefect of the Department who lived seven or eight centuries ago. The popular legend, as related by intelligent Chinese, is this. For many years a great dragon appeared in the river before the city, and, in order to get rid of the presence of the terrible monster, it was necessary to throw into the river, for his satisfaction, a human victim. The Prefect determined to deliver his people from this pest, even at the risk of his own life. He accordingly prepared himself for the assault, by sacrificing to the gods, and supplicating their assistance. He then armed himself with a bunch of calamus for a sword, because this grass is supposed to possess supernatural virtues for warding off noxious influences. Thus equipped, he plunged in to the attack, and killed the monster with his formidable weapon. He himself was drowned. He had directed that, if the water should show a white color, they should throw into it some red rice; if red, white rice. This would prevent his drowning. The water was first white and then red, and the attendants were too slow with their rice to save him. The Prefect was rewarded for his devotion with divine honors. Such are the silly tales with which these blind idolaters are deluded.

CHAPTER VII.

THE TAUISTS.

The Táuist priests are not numerous, and exercise but little influence over the popular mind, as compared with the Confucian school, and the priests and nuns of the Buddhists. The founder of this sect was Láu Kiun, who lived at the same time with Confucius. His only work, called the "*Tau Teh King*," "Essay on Reason and Virtue," is exceedingly obscure, both as to style and sentiment, so that it is difficult to determine what he meant to teach. Many foolish stories are told of him. One is, that he has appeared on the earth three different times, at intervals of about a thousand years, his appearance in the time of Confucius being the second. Another story is, that he was already an old man with hoary hair, when born, having been borne eighty years in his mother's womb. It is on this account that he is commonly called "Láu-tsz," which means "old child." He

led the life of an ascetic in retirement, and taught that man's spiritual nature can be best purified, and his passions brought into subjection, by living in habitual silence and contemplation.

In his view Eternal Reason is the source from which all things proceed, and to which all good men will eventually return. The wicked, instead of returning to the source of being again, must be kept at a distance from it, and must pass through successive births, and undergo again and again, the miseries incident to an earthly existence.

The existence of the world is thus accounted for. He says, "Reason (Táu) produced one, one produced two, two produced three, and three produced all things." Again, he says, "Before the birth of Heaven and Earth, there existed only an immense silence in illimitable space; an immeasurable void in endless silence. Reason alone circulated in this infinite void and silence."

The teachings of Láu-tsz are not now so much the foundation of the religious belief of the sect as those of some of his disciples. They have departed far from the simplicity of his philosophy. Although they have deified "Eternal Reason," and profess to reverence this abstraction above all things, they

are now among the grossest idolaters in China. Their idols are very numerous. The most exalted of their gods are the "Three Pure Ones," but the one most worshiped by the mass of the people is "Yuh Hwáng Shángti," or the "Pearly Imperial Ruler on High." This god is very generally worshiped by those Chinese who frequent the temples, and his image is often found in Buddhist, as well as in Táuist temples. There is very little rancor between the different sects, because the people generally are willing to patronize them all; and Buddhist and Táuist priests very gladly set up each other's idols in their temples, if they can thereby attract worshipers, and thus increase their profits.

This Táuist idol is the god generally referred to by the common people when they speak of *Shángti*, the "Ruler on High." It is this fact that has led so many of the missionaries in China to object to the use of this term as a designation of the true God. The birth-day of this idol god is celebrated with much pomp and ceremony. It occurs on the 9th day of the first month, during the new year's holidays, and his temple is always crowded on that day with numerous worshipers.

Here is a translation of a card of invitation once sent to a missionary, inviting him to at-

tend the ceremonies in honor of the birth-day of this god. "A festival is to be held on the 9th day of the first month, to offer congratulations on the occurrence of the holy birth-day of the Ruler on High. On that day devoutly arrange and offer rites, repentance, congratulations and prayers. You are entreated to go personally to the temple, and pay your respects without haste or waste of time. To do so is blessed indeed. Bring incense or money, it is not material which. At the Yu Shing Kwan stay your steps, and open your heart."

The forms of worship, and religious rites of this sect are very much the same with those of the Buddhists. The chief difference in external appearance between the priests of the two sects is, that the Buddhists shave off all the hair from their heads, while the Táuists leave a little tuft on the back of the head. The garments of both differ from those of the common people. The official robes of the Táuists, are not so long as those of the Buddhist priests, and are of a red color, while those of the Buddhists are yellow. There is, however, a class of Táuist priests called common or social priests, who have families, live at their own houses, and dress like other men. They are diviners and magicians.

The Táuists profess to have great power over the spirits and demons of the invisible world. The head of the sect is like the Lama of Thibet in being, in the estimation of his followers, immortal; that is, as soon as one dies, another is appointed in his place, and the spirit of the departed enters into the body of his successor. He exercises the authority of an emperor over the spirits of the dead, and he appoints the various deities to the districts over which they are to preside, and within which they are to be specially worshiped. He resides at the capital of the province of Kiang-si, and is called T'iang Tzien-sz.

These views of the spiritual powers of the priesthood lead, as a matter of course, to the belief in their ability to ward off noxious influences, most of which proceed from the machinations of evil spirits. Hence the charms and amulets manufactured by them are supposed to be very efficacious, and a large income is derived from their sale. For this purpose the power of the chief is to a certain extent delegated to each of the priests. They have taken pains to have it understood that the charms are good only for the year in which they are given, and at the new year the services of the priests are in great demand for preparing these mighty preventives of

evil. They consist merely of little slips of paper on which some enigmatical characters are written. These are pasted by the people over the doors of their houses, and the evil spirits dare not pass the doorway that is thus protected.

Dr. Medhurst tells us that in some places the Táuists have an annual ceremony for the purpose of purifying their town or neighborhood from evil spirits. On the birth-day of the "High Emperor of the Sombre Heavens," they assemble in front of his temple, and there march barefoot through a fire of burning charcoal. First are the chanting of prayers and sprinkling of holy water, accompanied by a ringing of little bells, and the din of horns. Brandishing swords, and slashing the burning coals with them, they frighten the demons. Then, with the priests in advance, and bearing the gods in their arms, they rush, with loud shouts of triumph, through the fire. Are they not "mad upon their idols?" They believe that if they have a sincere mind, the fire will not hurt them. They are horribly burnt, nevertheless, but have so much confidence in the efficacy of the ceremony, and are so fully persuaded of its necessity, that they willingly submit to the pain. This ceremony is not practised at Ningpo.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BUDDHISTS.

We come now to consider the most popular of the Chinese sects. Confucius left out the most important part of religion, for he denied all knowledge of our condition in the future world. But the minds of men can not be satisfied with a religion that leaves them in the dark on so essential a point. When, therefore, others professed to unveil the future, the eager curiosity of the popular mind grasped at the supposed revelation from the spirit land. The inward consciousness of the immortal spirit whispers something of its immortality, and affords some slight glimmerings of the impenetrable mystery which hangs around the tomb. No wonder, then, that the teachings of the Buddhists, as furnishing some slight relief to the gross darkness in which this people are involved, should be so generally popular. Their doctrines, too, suit the popular taste, and

reach the popular conscience better than those of the Táuists. All these sects, however, leave them at best in much doubt and uncertainty.

The Buddhist religion was first introduced into China about sixty-six years after the birth of Christ. The Emperor Ming, of the Han dynasty, who was then on the throne, having heard that a divine personage had appeared in the region of the west, sent an embassy to make inquiries concerning him. The embassy proceeded to India, and returned from thence to China with a number of Buddhist priests. They had been convinced that Buddha was the divine person they had been sent to seek, and therefore invited his priests to China. They were, no doubt, very glad to go, for the Buddhists have always been zealous in propagating their doctrines.

It has been supposed that this emperor had heard some rumor of the birth and wonderful miracles of Christ, and that it was this rumor which led him to send the embassy to the west. Some of the Apostles must have been preaching in or near India about this time, and it does not seem improbable that some rumor of their preaching and miracles had reached China.

The Buddhist priests, on their arrival in China, were received by the Emperor with

great favor. Their religion was freely promulgated, and rapidly spread among the people. It has ever since retained its hold upon the popular mind, and its temples now fill the land. Sometimes it has been in high favor at the Imperial court, and one emperor was so zealous that he sent to India for more priests, and no less than three thousand went to China. A temple, with a thousand rooms, was built for them, and they were treated with great respect. At this time there were thirteen thousand Buddhist temples in different parts of the empire. The sect, however, has not always been so fortunate, and has for the most part been opposed by the Chinese emperors. By the present rulers it is discouraged, though not persecuted. Severe proclamations have been repeatedly issued against some of the practices of the sect, but they are generally disregarded. Some of the emperors themselves practised Buddhist rites, and sent rich presents to Buddhist temples, even while denouncing the sect in public proclamations. Such proclamations, however, must necessarily tend to diminish the respectability, if not the influence, of the followers of Buddha.

Buddhism first originated in India, about a

thousand years before Christ. Buddha was a son of a king of Magadha, in Bahar. He at first, as some say, led a very dissipated and immoral life, but reformed, and devoted himself to a life of abstraction from the world, and was therefore considered very holy. During his life he was dignified with the title of Sakya-muni—"lion of the race of Sakya," and afterwards with that of Buddha, or sage. After his death he was worshiped as a god. His religion has spread through Siam, Ceylon, Burmah and Tibet, and has many adherents in China and Japan. Let us see now what this religion teaches.

This system of idolatry contains less that is revolting, and in its morality departs less from the truth, than any other of the false religions that have prevailed among the heathen. Its influence in China has, no doubt, been to some extent salutary, from the fact that it brings prominently to view a future state of rewards and punishments, which had been quite left out of their system by the Chinese sages.

The principal precepts of Buddha are ten. They are the following: "1st. Thou shalt not kill." This refers to all animals and insects, as well as to men. "2d. Thou shalt not steal.

3d. Thou shalt not commit adultery. 4th. Thou shalt not lie. 5th. Thou shalt not slander. 6th. Thou shalt not desire the death of thine enemies. 7th. Thou shalt not covet. 8th. Abhor all idle and indecent conversation. 9th. Thou shalt not betray the secrets of another. 10th. Do not err in the true faith, or think it false."

Those who aim at higher degrees of holiness obey additional commands: such, for example, as those which forbid to marry; to drink intoxicating liquor; to smell odoriferous flowers; to wear costly garments, or eat food in the afternoon.

But the great question which presses itself upon the conscience of every man, to some extent at least, is "how may sin be pardoned?" "How may I escape the punishment I deserve?" The Buddhists resort to a method which is not very uncommon, even among people who have the Bible. That is, they open a kind of debt and credit account with Heaven. If their good deeds outnumber their evil deeds, then they are safe, and they do not find it difficult to persuade themselves that this is the case. The great gospel idea of free pardon, without any merit, is too high for man to reach without the aid of revelation. According to the Buddhist scheme, then, a man

receives reward or punishment, in exact proportion to his merits or his sins. There is no way of expiating sin, but by the performance of good deeds sufficient to counterbalance it.

CHAPTER IX.

THE BUDDHISTS—ACQUISITION OF MERIT.

In order that a religion may commend itself to the corrupt human heart, and thus become popular, it must provide some easy way by which men may satisfy the rebukes of conscience, and it is important that this should be done without interfering very much with the indulgence of evil passions. If, at the same time, some provision can be made for gratifying pride, it will be all the better. The Romanists have tried to make the Christian religion popular, by adding to it what is needed to make it satisfy these requirements. The Buddhists, too, have taken care to make it easy to acquire merit.

One way of laying up a rich store of merit is to repeat over the name of Buddha. The amount of merit may be indefinitely increased by simply increasing the number of

repetitions. When a person has repeated it three hundred thousand times, he may begin to hope for a personal vision of the god. In the temples, the priests sometimes allow themselves to be shut up for months together, doing nothing but repeating over and over, day and night, the name of Buddha. In a temple at T'ien-t'ai, fifty miles south of Ningpo, there have been as many as ten or twelve priests thus voluntarily imprisoned at the same time. During the day they all keep up a constant repetition of the name O-mi-tò-fúh, and at night, they keep it up by taking turns, some continuing their monotonous song while the others sleep. They never leave their cell for any purpose until the appointed period is fulfilled. No wonder they all have a vacant, idiotic look, as though but a slight glimmering of intellect remained to them!

It is not the priests only who thus devote themselves to laying up, as they suppose, treasure in heaven. Some among the people also, are very diligent in the work. See that old man. His head is hoary with age. A flowing white beard rests upon his bosom. With tottering steps, and leaning upon his staff, he enters the small room used as a chapel, by one who preaches of Jesus and the resurrection. Perhaps there may be something in

this religion that will help to give peace of conscience, and hope of happiness after death. He listens with deep attention during the sermon, but his fingers are all the while busy counting the beads he holds in his hand, and his lips continually pronounce, in a low whisper, the name O-mi-tò-fúh. And now the service is closed, and the congregation is dismissed. But the old man is not yet satisfied, and he approaches the missionary to ask for further information. He addresses him— "Your doctrine, sir, is most excellent—O-mi-tò-fúh. I am anxious to learn more about it—O-mi-tò-fúh. How must I worship Jesus? O-mi-tò-fúh."

"Ah! my venerable elder brother, if you would worship Jesus aright, you must forsake every sin, and must not worship any other god, for all others are false gods."

"Yes, I know I must forsake sin—O-mi-tò-fúh. This I have done long ago—O-mi-tò-fúh. I do not sin now—O-mi-tò-fúh. I am now too old to sin—O-mi-tò-fúh. I am old, and must soon die—O-mi-tò-fúh. I wish to be a disciple of Jesus—O-mi-tò-fúh, and to-morrow I must go to my home far away in the country —O-mi-tò-fúh. What must I do?—O-mi-tò-fúh."

Explanations are given, and now the old man must depart. But suddenly he drops upon

his knees and bows his head to the earth. Being restrained, he rises and takes his leave, expressing his gratitude. "Many thanks to you, sir, for your kind instruction—O-mi-tò-fúh, O-mi-tò-fúh. May we meet again—O-mi-tò-fúh."

This is no fiction, but an actual occurrence. There are many such old men in China, and old women too, seeking for some means of securing happiness after death. Not unfrequently we may meet these old people, conscious that their end is at hand, walking in the street, and as we pass we hear them muttering—O-mi-tò-fúh. Alas! how many of them have gone down to the grave with the name O-mi-tò-fúh on their lips! What unspeakable cruelty to withhold the helping hand, and refuse the light they grope after!

Besides this repetition of the name of Buddha, there are various other means of acquiring merit. The repetition of prayers is highly important, and a strict account is kept of the number of repetitions. In one of the published liturgies a portion of the book is taken up with small circles to the number of 4,700, and every time the devotee repeats all the prayers, he makes a dot in one of the circles. This book will be a witness for him in the other world. To repair a road, or build a bridge, to give

ground for a grave, or alms to the poor, are deeds which weigh heavily in the scale of meritorious actions. It is better still to contribute money to the support of the priests, to build or decorate a temple, or to renounce the pleasures of riches. Peculiar blessings are promised to one who makes an image of Buddha, or writes a sermon on his doctrine. Such a one will never be born in hell. He will never be born a girl, but will be born in a respectable family, and in the end will be born in heaven.

The highest state of happiness, according to the Buddhist theory, consists in absorption into the deity; or, as they express it, the attaining of the state of Nirwana. This is a state of absolute abstraction from all outward objects—a state of utter unconsciousness. It is, in fact, annihilation. This perfect state of blessedness, however, but few can hope to attain. It requires a life of peculiar holiness, and innumerable repetitions of the name of Buddha. The way to attain it is to live a life of abstraction from the world. The greater the success in abstracting onesself from the world in this life, the nearer approach will be made to this state of nonentity in the world to come. If a man can but become so holy as to stop thinking entirely, he

will be quite sure of being happy when he dies.

In order to attain this happiness, some of the priests shut themselves up in a cell, and thus remain for years excluded from all worldly concerns. Let us look at one of these men. We will find one at the temple of the "Tsz-choh-ling," or "Dark-colored Bamboo Grove," on the island of Pu-to. There he is in his little cell in one of the temple buildings. The door is bolted and barred, and there is no admittance; but he will have no objection to receive a visitor at his little window, which is his only means of communication with the outer world. It is only about a foot square, and through it he receives his food. His cell is some ten or twelve feet square. On one side is a shrine, in which is placed an image of Buddha. On the opposite side is another shrine, with curtains. This is for the monk himself. Here he seats himself, with his legs crossed, his clasped hands resting upon his thighs, and his eyes closed. He looks as much as may be like the senseless image on the opposite side of his cell. The curtain is drawn in front of him, so as to exclude the world from this holy place. If he can "swallow down his passions," if he can

cease to think, he has made some advance towards the nonentity he desires.

He has nothing to do but repeat the name O-mi-tò-fúh, burn incense before the idol, and offer prayers. But he must eat, drink, and sleep, and the other priests are careful to provide for all his wants, for by so doing they also acquire merit. His pale and haggard countenance, his unshaven face, bony fingers, long nails like birds' claws, and his filthy garments give him a repulsive appearance. His idiotic look indicates that he has succeeded in debasing his intellect, so as to reduce himself well nigh to a level with the brutes, and his sickly complexion and ghastly expression of countenance, although he is still young, seem to foreshadow a speedy entrance into that world in which he expects to realize the nonentity to which he aspires. Miserable man! how great his disappointment then, when all his hopes shall perish!

No wonder he is pale and wan, for there he has been, buried alive, for nearly three years. At the expiration of that period he is to go out into the world, and travel about the country a holy beggar, conferring merit on others by affording them the opportunity to bestow alms upon so devout a follower of Buddha. After a year's recreation he will be ready for

another three years' confinement. He evidently thinks himself very eminent in holiness already, and delights in being an object of curiosity, especially to persons who have come from a distant quarter of the world. He is full of talk, but pride and self-conceit are manifest in almost every sentence.

Turn now to another exhibition of asceticism. In the middle of this same island—Pu-to—is the Fuh-ting-san—Buddha's Peak. The ascent is long and tedious, even with the aid of the stone steps that make a regular stairway to the top. About half way up we come to a little temple, with dilapidated roof and time-worn walls. As we approach, we hear a solitary voice, and recognize the tones of the sing-song chant with which we have become familiar all over the island. And now we hear the words, O-mi-tò-fúh, O-mi-tò-fúh. Approaching nearer, we see the solitary anchorite who is thus intent on "treasuring up merit." How sad to think he knows not of a better way! He is an old man, stooping with age. His long dishevelled hair shows his "neglect of the body." For years this hovel of a temple has been his abode, and for years this conning over the words O-mi-tò-fúh has been his occupation. Nor will he cease this incessant cry while he has breath in his body.

But he is not confined to his cell. He may breathe the pure air of heaven. We ask him a few questions, but he has scarcely time to converse with mortals. His answers are very brief, and always accompanied with the low murmur—O-mi-tò-fúh, and with the corresponding movement of his beads, by which he keeps the reckoning of the number of his repetitions.

Years have passed since we saw that old man, and he has probably ere this gone the way of all flesh. What has become of his vain repetitions now?

It is by such means that these deluded devotees expect to fit themselves for heaven. They have no conception of love as belonging to religion, and their good works are not such as are calculated to do much good to their fellow-men.

CHAPTER X.

THE BUDDHISTS—TRANSMIGRATION.

However these ascetics may deny themselves in this world, they hope to make ample amends in the world to come. Few can hope to attain the state of Nirwana or nonentity, and even of these many must reach it through a toilsome series of changes. Many must rise to it gradually through the whole series of the thirty-three heavens. In these heavens they will be exempt from the toil and self-denial imposed upon them in this life. There they may live, with a thousand heavenly wives, in unspeakably shining habitations, and spend their time in dancing with beautiful goddesses, in splendid palaces. It is sometimes called the "Happy Land in the West." It is a country of gardens and palaces, with birds of melodious song, where there is no pain, no disease, or death, or old age,

These heavens, however, may not be at-

tained until after the lapse of many ages, passed in various states of existence, and after many transmigrations. This doctrine of the metempsychosis is almost universally believed by the Chinese. Not only the Buddhists, but the learned scholars and most ardent upholders of the doctrines of Confucius also believe it. A learned Chinese scholar once told a singular story as a proof that this doctrine is true; that is, the doctrine that the soul of man, after death, passes into the body of some animal. "A friend of mine," said this learned teacher, "was once walking along the road near his house, when he saw four men of a very remarkable appearance. He looked at them for some time with surprise, when they suddenly disappeared. Going on a little further, he saw a sow which had just given birth to four pigs. Now, said the teacher, if those men did not pass into the pigs, whither did they go?" This story he told with all earnestness and sincerity, and really believed that it was an unanswerable proof of the doctrine.

This notion about the transmigration of souls is connected with their theory of the origin of the world. They believe that matter is eternal, and that everything that has life has within itself that which has brought it

into being, and contains within itself a certain tendency to a fixed destiny. The world was brought into existence by chance. This world is only one of an infinite series, which occupy the same place one after another. When the time arrives which is fixed by nature, each world is destroyed, and then there is a blank for a period equal to that during which the world existed. After this another world, like the former, springs up in its place, just as the leaves which fall from the trees in the autumn are replaced by others in the spring. The period of the world's existence is called a calpa. To give an idea of the duration of a calpa, they say that if a man were to walk up a mountain nine miles high, once in every hundred years, and continue to do this until the mountain should be worn down to a plain, the time required to wear it down would be nothing to the fourth part of a calpa.

As the world, when destroyed, springs up again to pass through another stage of existence, so a man, when he dies, merely passes into another state of being, to come into the world again at some future time. What his condition shall be when he dies, will depend upon his conduct in this life. What kind of an animal he will be; how long he will continue to be an animal; when he is born again

into the world as a man, whether he will be rich or poor; all depend upon his conduct, and upon the favor of the gods. If he has not been very wicked, he may assume the shape of some noble animal, not to be abused by men. If he deserves a heavier punishment, he may be a hog, or cat, or rat, or some vile reptile. A very wicked man may pass at once into hell, or he may first pass through the bodies of a number of different animals, and be landed at last, by this round-about way, in the place of punishment.

There are eight chief hells, according to the holy books of the Buddhists, and with each of these are connected sixteen smaller hells, all fitted into each other like a case of pots. They are inclosed on all sides with high walls, thirty-six miles thick. In this place of torment there are various kinds of punishment for every different kind of crime. Pictures of persons undergoing punishment are sometimes painted on the walls of Buddhist temples. Many of these pictures, too, are printed and sold at the shops on the street. They represent all kinds of horrid torture. In one place is a man pounded with a sledge-hammer, or having his bones crushed by fierce looking demons, with a huge bone-breaker. Here is one having his flesh torn off from his bones

with pincers; there another roasted on a spit; while another still is having melted lead poured down his throat; or is thrust into a caldron of boiling oil. Others may be seen undergoing the process of transmigration. The head of one is beginning to assume the shape of a hog's snout; while the horns and ears of a cow are starting out from the head of another.

This, however, is not a place of eternal punishment. Even in hell a man may have hope, for when he has suffered enough to make expiation for his sins, he may, perhaps, be born again as a man in some menial capacity, or as a woman; and if he then leads a virtuous life, he may, possibly, in the course of ages, get into heaven.

How degrading this dogma which reduces a man to a level with the beasts that perish! The poor Buddhist can certainly have no very high conception of the dignity of human nature. To-day, indeed, he is a man; a thinking, intelligent being; but to-morrow he may be a poor whining dog, or mewing cat.

One of the old Jesuit missionaries, Le Comte, relates that he was once called in to baptize a sick person, an old man of seventy. The old man gave his reasons for desiring baptism. "I have for some time past," said he, "lived

on the Emperor's benevolence. The priests assure me that after death I shall be obliged to repay the Emperor's generosity by becoming a post-horse to carry dispatches. They exhort me to take care not to stumble, or wince, or bite. They tell me that if I travel well, eat little, and am patient, I may excite the compassion of the gods, and be born into the world as a man of rank. Sometimes I dream that I am ready harnessed for the rider, and I awake in a sweat, hardly knowing whether I am a man or a horse. They tell me, Father, that people of your religion continue to be men in the next world as they are in this. I am ready to embrace your religion; for I had rather be a Christian, than become a beast." The Jesuit baptized him, and the old man died, happy in being delivered from becoming a post-horse.

It is this doctrine of transmigration that has led to their absurd notions of compassion to animals. To treat animals well is the same as being kind to men, for their bodies are animated by the spirits of men. Unkindness might subject the offender to annoyance from some injured ghost. The priests sometimes keep a number of hogs or fowls in their mo-

* Vide "Progress of Religious Ideas," by L. M. Child.

nasteries, feeding them well, until they die of disease, or old age, or more likely from over-feeding. To save the life of an animal is, of course, very meritorious. An instance is related of a man going out to kill a poor diseased dog. An old woman met him, begged for the dog, and then took him off into the country, and let him run. For such a deed a great reward is expected; yet the poor are often left to die of hunger, and the diseased and dying are sometimes turned out to die in the street, without any care or attention. The man is neglected, that the beast may be cared for; the living left to perish, that attention may be bestowed on the dead.

CHAPTER XI.

BUDDHIST PRIESTS AND TEMPLES—YUHWONG.

The Buddhists are divided into two schools; one adhering to the teachings of the sacred books, the other receiving the instructions of certain celebrated Chinese teachers, handed down from former generations. These distinctions, however, are not made at all prominent, and some of the priests themselves scarce know to which school they belong.

The priests of Buddha have very little personal influence among any class of Chinese. By the literary class they are held in contempt, and are denounced as an idle, useless, and lazy set. Such they truly are, and it is not strange that among a people so thrifty and industrious as the Chinese, they should be thoroughly despised. Not only are they idle and useless, but too often openly immoral and wicked. Most of them spend their time chiefly in gambling and opium smoking. The priest-

hood is not considered by any means an honorable, or even reputable, occupation; and it is not sought for by persons belonging to the respectable classes. This may be attributed, no doubt, in the main, to the influence of the teachings of Confucius. Buddhism itself has been considerably modified in China, by being brought into contact with the Confucian philosophy. According to Confucius, it is wrong for a man not to get married; but, according to Buddha, it is a great merit to remain single, and the priests are absolutely forbidden to marry. As the Chinese consider it very important to have children to minister to the wants of their souls after death, this prohibition tends to keep young men from joining the ranks of the priesthood. Besides this, the injunction not to destroy animal life, of course, carries with it the necessity of entire abstinence from the use of animal food. This prohibition is rigidly enforced in the case of the priests, and the self-denial thus required is also calculated to repel young men from resorting to this means of procuring a livelihood.

The ranks of the priesthood therefore must be recruited chiefly from among the indolent, who relish a lazy life; or the abject poor, who are driven to this resource by want; or those who

have not shrewdness enough to make a living at any honest business; or else those who are actuated by a sincere desire to procure future happiness by this means. There are, no doubt, a considerable number who are influenced by this last motive, but it is small in comparison with the whole body.

The priests, however, have found by experience, that it will not do to rely upon any or all of these motives, for the supply of the means of perpetuating their order. They therefore resort to the expedient of buying the children of poor parents, and bringing them up as priests. In almost every temple there are some boys who have thus been purchased, and who, therefore, have no choice but to consecrate themselves to Buddha. While young they act as servants for the elder priests.

The priests live, in part, by begging, but chiefly by the proceeds of their services at the temples, and on funeral occasions at private houses. Rooms are provided for them in the temples. Each has a room assigned to him, sometimes by himself, sometimes in company with one or two others. Any little private property they may have is respected by the fraternity. Some of them make long pilgrimages to the sacred places of the sect; and some of them spend most of their time in thus

travelling about from place to place. Wherever they go they are entertained for one day and night, by their brethren in their temples, free of expense.

Some of the Buddhist temples are on an extensive scale, and several hundred priests are often found residing permanently at a single establishment. There is a celebrated one some ten miles from Ningpo, called Yuhwong. It is beautifully situated in a narrow valley, embowered in trees, and having high hills rising abruptly on three sides. There are many distinct buildings on the premises, but some of them are much out of repair.

Crossing a large inclosure, around which is a wall built of broken tiles and mud, you enter the temple-court through a covered gateway, guarded by four immense idols, frowning gloomily upon you. Crossing the court you enter the main building. It is one story high, and contains no other room but the large worshiping hall. This room is paved with large stone slabs, and is one hundred feet long, by seventy broad. As you enter the doorway, three huge idols look down upon you from the shrine in the centre of the room. They are the three precious Buddhas—representing the past, the present, and the future. There they sit, with their feet drawn up like tailors at work, gaz-

ing down with demure and solemn countenance, as if wholly occupied with their own thoughts. They are seated upon a pediment twelve feet square, and although in a sitting posture, are not less than twenty feet high. They are richly gilt, and the priests will tell you that these precious gods cost a thousand dollars each. Between them stand two attendant idols, also richly ornamented, and some twelve feet in height. The place is too sacred to be lightly polluted with the broom, and the gods seem to be very indifferent as to the cleanliness of their habitations. In the roof above many sparrows have built their nests, and the hallowed shrine beneath them is defiled with filth.

Passing round this shrine, we find behind it, and facing the other way, a large female figure carrying a child in her arms and seated upon a horse, in the midst of the sea, and surrounded by numerous rocks and islands. This is the goddess Kwany-in, "She who regards the prayers of the world." Around the walls of the room are arranged thirty-four gilt images of the ordinary life size, representing inferior deities.

From this we pass to another hall, in the rear of the first. To reach it we ascend a short flight of steps, and cross a smoothly-paved

court. This room is nearly as large as the first, and it contains the object which gives to the place its highest distinction. Entering the door, you see two shrines, of a pyramidal shape, one behind the other, and both richly ornamented. Lights are kept constantly burning before them. Over the hinder one is suspended an immense silken canopy. The other is a small brass shrine, highly polished, and having a glass door. It stands on an elevated platform, composed of heavy blocks of granite. Looking through the glass door, we see a couple of small figures, and a few flowers, together with a small dingy-looking tower, shaped like the large pagodas which the Buddhists build, in order to secure good luck. This seems to be an object of special veneration. What is it? The priests tell you it is a Shay-li—or a Wuh-Fuh—a living Buddha—*i. e.*, a relic of Buddha.

When Buddha was upon earth he taught his followers to hold in special reverence three things; to wit, the relics of his body, the books containing his doctrine, and an assembly of his worshipers. This Shay-li is said to be a relic of his sacred body. The Buddhists say there are eighty-four thousand pores in a man's body. Buddha, after his death, changed his remains into very small fragments

like diamond dust, and Ayuka afterwards built for his relics eighty-four thousand pagodas. Nineteen of these, it is said, were built in China, and this temple at Yuhwong is one of them.

This wonderful substance, the priests tell us, possesses the singular property of changing its color, so as to exhibit to the beholder the true state of his heart, and make known his future prospects. This is a very valuable possession, for it attracts pilgrims to this wonderful shrine from distant parts of the empire, and brings in a considerable revenue to the priests. When a visitor wishes to learn how he stands with the god, he first pays the priest his fee. The priest then performs his prostrations before the shrine, and brings forth the little pagoda. Within is a little bell, at the mouth of which the relic is placed. The color indicates the desired information. Yellow is the best, and white the worst color. Unbelievers, however, can see nothing.

In a temple near Fuhchau, there is one of these relics, much more easily seen, it would appear, than this at Yuhwong. It is said to be a very good specimen of the tusk of a mastodon, or of an elephant. These relics are no doubt as genuine, and as efficacious, as those the Papists delight to honor.

CHAPTER XII.

BUDDHIST TEMPLES—ISLAND OF PUTO—TEMPLE SERVICES.

The island of Puto is famous in the annals of Buddhism. For a thousand years it has been devoted to the religious rites and services of the Buddhist sect. It is one of the most easterly islands of the Chusan archipelago, and is about seventy miles from the main land, near Ningpo. The legendary account of it is, that a devoted Japanese priest, in returning from a visit to the celebrated temple at T'ien T'ai, south of Ningpo, found his vessel unaccountably obstructed by vast quantities of water lilies and shell-fish in the water. He prostrated himself before an image of the goddess Kwan-yin, to implore her protection. His vessel was at once drifted towards the shore of Puto. He landed, and related the marvellous deliverance vouchsafed by the goddess. A poor woman gave up her dwell-

ing to be consecrated to the goddess who had displayed such power. The priest enshrined his image here, and took up his abode permanently on the island. This was about a thousand years ago. The goddess Kwan-yin has ever since been honored as the patron deity of the place.

The island soon became famous. Pilgrimages were made to its shrines. Large and costly temples were built. The priests flocked to its altars, and the emperors themselves were impressed with the highest veneration for the place. The whole island was granted to the priests, and parts also of neighboring islands. Many presents have been received from the emperors at various times. Sometimes it has been a costly temple, sometimes a magnificent idol, and again a large stone tablet, with an appropriate inscription inscribed upon it.

But now the glory has departed. Most of the temples are sadly out of repair, and some of them lie in ruins. For more than a hundred years no presents have come from the Emperor—no supplies from the imperial treasury. The number of priests, once perhaps reaching three thousand, now hardly reaches three hundred. More than a hundred temples, large and small, still occupy its hills

and valleys, but many of them are empty and in ruins.

The island is about five miles long, and from one to two broad. The cultivable land is well improved, and a number of laborers are employed by the priests to cultivate their fields. The surface is very irregular and hilly, but many fertile spots are found in the valleys, which are made to furnish a considerable portion of the rice and vegetables required for the food of the priests.

This is a favorable place for witnessing the Buddhist rites of worship. The two principal temples or monasteries are called respectively the front and the back monastery—the "Seen Sz'" and the How Sz'." Landing at the jetty, we proceed by a well-paved road, lined on either side with trees, to the Seen Sz', about a mile distant. As we pass along we see the name of the god O-mi-tò-Fúh (Buddha) here and there inscribed upon the rocks. On every hand Buddha and his idolatry stare us in the face, except when we look off to our right, where we have a view of the wide, wide sea, which rolls it waves against the rocks some distance below us.

Rising by a gentle ascent to the top of the hill, we descend again into the valley, and find ourselves in the precincts of the temple.

To enter the inclosure we must pass through a small tower, covered with tiles of the imperial yellow color, indicating that it is a gift from the Emperor. Under this roof is an immense tablet of tolerably white marble, with a long inscription. This is an honor conferred upon the place by the Emperor Kanghi, who reigned from 1662 to 1723—sixty-one years.

Passing through this, we cross a beautiful stone bridge thrown over a large pond or artificial lake. The surface of the lake is completely covered with lotus plants of immense size. We now pass through one of the sacred buildings, and enter a large court, and before us stands the principal temple. On our right, as we enter, is a little village, full of women and children, the families of the laborers employed for cultivating the fields. And now we hear a low monotonous chant proceeding from the great temple. The priests are at their devotions. In the elevated shrine sit the Three Precious Buddhas —huge idols, once gaudily gilt and painted, but now dingy with age. The smoke of incense rises from the huge censer which stands upon the altar. In front of the altar stand fourteen priests, erect, motionless, with clasped hands, and downcast eyes, a posture which,

with their shaven heads and long flowing grey robes, gives them an appearance of the deepest solemnity. The low and solemn tones of the slowly moving chant they are singing might, but for the hideous idols, awaken solemn emotions. Three priests keep time with the music, one by beating on an immense drum suspended from the roof, another on a large iron vessel, and the third on a hollow wooden sounding-piece about the size and shape of a human skull. Continuing the chant for a short time, they suddenly, at the signal from a small bell in the hand of their leader, kneel upon low stools, covered with straw matting; at the same time bowing low, and striking their foreheads against the stone pavement. Then, slowly rising, they face inward towards the altar, seven facing to the right and seven to the left, and immediately resume their chant. At first they sing in a slowly moving measure, then gradually increase the rapidity of the music until they utter the words as fast as it is possible to articulate, after which they return gradually to the slow and solemn measure with which they commenced. Again a signal from the little bell changes their movement, and they march slowly in procession around the shrine, while one of their number takes a cup of holy water

and pours it upon a low stone pillar at the temple door. Thus they continue their prostrations, and chanting, and tinkling of bells, for half an hour or more. But they cannot be supposed to be anxious to delude us into the belief that there is anything like heart devotion in all this ceremony. Some of the old monks, indeed, seem exceedingly devout, but several of the younger ones do not hesitate to laugh and joke, and even step aside for a moment to converse with the strangers who are spectators of their worship. The whole scene forcibly reminds one of the mummeries practised in the Roman Catholic Church. The shaven heads of the priests, their long robes, frequent prostrations, chantings, beads, and even their idol, cannot fail to suggest their antitypes in that apostate church.

This is a fair specimen of the regular worship of the temples. Long before daylight some of the priests rise to matins, and strike the bells and drums to rouse their gods from sleep. Again, in the forenoon, they are at their devotions; and in the afternoon, sometime before sunset, they are summoned to vespers. At nine o'clock at night, some of them repeat the ceremony of the morning.

Besides this there are frequent services performed to order, for the special benefit of some individual, for which they are paid.

Buddhism having been introduced into China from India, most of the prayers used in the temple services are written in the Pâli —a dialect of the Sanscrit—which is the sacred language of the sect. An attempt has been made to express the sounds of that language in Chinese characters, but as this can be done but imperfectly, an unintelligible jargon is produced, which nobody can understand.

Many of the sacred books have been translated into Chinese, and most of the monasteries are provided with libraries. Some of these libraries are very extensive. They have also, in some instances, books written in the original Sanscrit, and although they do not understand a word they contain, the priests preserve them with the greatest care. At T'ien-T'ai there is such a work which has been kept there for many hundred years. It is a manuscript written on palm leaf. There are fifty leaves, which are written on both sides, and although, as is said, more than thirteen hundred years old, it is reported by English missionaries who have seen it, to be in a per-

fect state of preservation. It is an object of great veneration to the priests, and is very carefully kept in a rosewood box. This is probably the only manuscript of the kind in the east of China.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE BUDDHISTS—SPECIAL SERVICES—POPULAR WORSHIP.

Besides the regular temple services, there are many special occasions on which extraordinary services are observed. These occasions the priests are careful to multiply as much as possible, for they always reap a plentiful harvest from the numerous worshipers. Such an occasion, for example, is the birth-day of the goddess Kwan-yin. On the island of Puto it is observed with special honor. By three o'clock in the morning the numerous temples are resounding with the sound of the noisy gong, the heavy drum, and the hum of many voices chanting the praises of the goddess. Throughout the day the services are maintained. If we walk over the island, we shall everywhere be greeted with the same ever-recurring sounds. As we pursue our way along solitary paths, winding around the sides of the hills, or through the

green valleys, the sound of the chant, and the drum, and the rapid stroke of the hollow scull-shaped sounding-piece, reverberates along the mountain sides, and mingles with the roar of the surf breaking on the adjacent beach. Here is a little temple perched upon a rock or overhanging cliff. There is one nestled in a little nook half-concealed by a bamboo grove. In most of these there is but a solitary worshiper, but he goes through all the prescribed ceremonies with the utmost gravity and formality.

The priests resort to many devices for attracting the people to the temples, and thus getting hold of their money. At a temple in Ningpo, in 1846, a great ceremony was got up on the occasion of casting a new bell for the use of the establishment, to replace one carried away by the English in 1840. Great efforts were made to make known the fact beforehand. Handbills were issued, calling upon the people to contribute liberally to this important object, and assuring them that such contributions would be more than usually meritorious. Priests were sent out through the whole surrounding country, begging money for the purpose. At the appointed time the people flocked in crowds to the temple, under the impression that worship

performed at that time would be peculiarly acceptable to the god, and the neglect of it more than ordinarily offensive. The services were prolonged for five days, and during all that time, day and night, the temple was crowded with deluded worshipers, and filled, almost to suffocation, with the smoke of incense.

On another occasion, a few months later, at another temple, a seven days' service was held. Great pains had been taken to collect a large crowd, and as a special attraction it was given out that a noted devotee, who by his austerities and self-inflicted tortures had become eminently holy, would himself sit as a god, and be made an object of worship. Some of the more respectable of the people were greatly offended at this horrid blasphemy, and complained to the Tau-tai, the chief magistrate of the city, with a view to prevent it, but he declined interfering.

It is chiefly on such occasions as these that the people are found at the Buddhist temples, though some worship also at the full and new moons. Here then we may see them in the midst of their idolatrous rites. On the occasion referred to, a vast crowd was gathered, for some five or six hundred priests had been drawn together from various places, and the

people imagine that the efficacy of the prayers will be increased in proportion to the number of priests participating in the service.

In the outer court of the temple is a motley concourse of all classes of people, men and women, rich and poor; some elegantly dressed in silk and satin; some half covered with filthy rags. There is a man with a candy-stand, and his customers are gambling for his sweetmeats. Close by him is a vender of hot cakes, with cooked meats and vegetables; and here again we see another offering his hookah, or water pipe, to those who are willing to pay for a smoke of tobacco. These, with other hawkers of various articles, keep up a continual outcry, calling upon customers to purchase their goods.

All who worship must be provided with candles and incense, and ready-made prayers. These, too, are sold in the crowd. The candles are made of the product of the Chinese tallow-tree, and are of a brilliant red color. The incense is made of sandal wood, brought from the islands of the Pacific Ocean. It is prepared by mixing the saw-dust of the sandal wood with an adhesive paste, and rolling it around a stick of the same wood, about a

foot in length, so as to look like a very small thin candle.

But to return to the temple court. In one corner a platform has been erected for the occasion. There five or six priests are seated, all busily engaged in writing. They are filling up the blanks of the printed prayers to suit the wishes of purchasers. A crowd of eager applicants gather around this stand. Some purchase but one of these prayers, others eight or ten—or even twenty or thirty. They purchase not only for themselves but for some of their neighbors, by whom they have been commissioned, and who are perhaps unable to attend themselves. The priests derive a handsome revenue from the sale of these prayers, as well as from the candles and incense sticks. A prayer that costs but a single *cash* they sell for eight or ten.

Those who cannot afford to pay for these necessary articles of worship must not expect the favor of the god, and therefore need not look for courtesy from the priests. Here a poor beggar woman is soliciting money to help her to offer her prayers with the rest. There is a wretched man in rags, crawling about under the feet of the crowd, on his hands and knees, soliciting alms. He is or-

dered off the premises by the compassionate priests.

Within the temple the scene is no less striking. There are the priests going through their senseless mummeries. Their bells and drums keep up the attention of their gods. The great hall is filled with worshipers. There are long rows of women seated upon benches, each with a mat before her, on which is laid a printed prayer. All are earnestly engaged in repeating over the name of Buddha in the usual sing-song tone. Hour after hour they go on singing, Nan-mô O-mi-tò-Fúh, Nan-mô O-mi-tò-Fúh. They are all busily engaged at the same time in counting the string of beads they hold in their hands, and ever and anon they kneel upon the mat before them, clasp their hands together, and bow down before the idol. Here and there is a bench full of men engaged in the same manner, but the great mass of worshipers are women. One reason of the earnestness of the women, perhaps, is their fear that when they die they may again be born into the world as women, a fate they are anxious to avoid. Some of them remain all night at their devotions. The men, however, are generally content with merely looking on, or at most with

performing a few prostrations, and then returning to their business or their pleasures.

When a worshiper enters he first bows low before the shrine, and then places his candles burning upon the candlesticks, which are on the altar. Then he lights his incense sticks, and in the same manner places them in the great censer. As soon as his back is turned one of the priests puts out the candles and removes them, to be again sold, or used for their own purposes.

But in one of the side halls is another phase of heathen devotions. There we see a family group, a father and mother, grandfather and grandmother, all very much interested in observing a young child, scarce able to stand, who has been brought to seek the favor of the god. The father has taken him and placed him upon a stool, kneeling before one of the idols. Placing one hand upon the boy's breast, and the other on his back, he moves his body forward, and thus assisted the little fellow makes numerous prostrations. The whole group look on with evident satisfaction at the performance. It is thus that the ideas of a vain superstition are instilled into the young minds of heathen children. No wonder these ideas take a strong hold upon their

feelings. They are associated with their earliest recollections, and with their most pleasing memories of parental affection. Is it strange that there should be difficulty in eradicating these notions, and replacing them by those which are more pure, and more opposed to the feelings of the corrupt heart?

CHARTER XIV.

THE BUDDHISTS—PENANCE FESTIVAL.

In order to attract worshipers and increase their revenue, the priests take advantage of the practice of self torture encouraged by their system. Not only priests but often also some of the more devout among the people, submit to this voluntary penance. Sometimes this torture consists in burning off a finger, and occasionally, it is said, even a hand; but this last is very unusual. The common mode of inflicting this torture is to wrap tightly around the finger some hemp which has been dipped in oil, and then burning it while the priests are reciting prayers. A less painful form of torture consists in burning spots on the head or on the arms, the number of these spots depending on the zeal of the devotee. Thus they torture the body for the sin of the soul.

When such an exhibition is to take place,

public notice is given, and the ceremonies of the occasion are made as imposing as possible, in order to gull the people out of their hard earned money. The profits derived from such exhibitions of fanatical zeal are very considerable, but they are somewhat diminished by the necessity of a small bribe to some of the subordinate officials; for the mandarins have rigidly prohibited such public demonstrations. The prohibition is not enforced, but it enables the grasping officials to obtain a gratuity as a bribe for keeping quiet.

This sometimes gives rise to trouble, generating squabbles which disturb the public peace. In 1852 the monks of the "Observing Hall Monastery" at Ningpo advertised a "penance festival." A literary man, named Wang (which means King), made exorbitant demands upon the monastery for hush-money, but the worthy fathers refused compliance. The consequence was that on the day of the ceremony Mr. Wang appeared at the monastery at the head of nearly a hundred men, whom he had hired, and made an attack on the priests, greatly to the dismay of the crowds of devout women who were at their prayers. The attack, however, was successfully resisted by the monks, and the result was a suit before the district magistrate. A decision was given against the

monks, and some of them were sentenced to sit exposed in the street, with a cangue, or huge wooden collar, around their necks, and a fine of a thousand dollars was imposed on the establishment. Some of the literati, not satisfied with this, also issued a placard, which was put up in all parts of the city, denouncing the priests in the most abusive language, and accusing them of "entertaining vile characters," guzzling liquors, alluring nuns and disreputable women into their temple, and in fine, committing all kinds of iniquity. Some of them are denounced by name; particularly "Radically Intelligent," "Condensed Purity," "Happy Mountain," "Intelligent Pool," "Auspicious Peak," and others.

One of the most celebrated temples near Ningpo, is that at a place called Ling-fung—Spiritual Peak, about twenty miles from the city. On the birthday of one of their gods—a deified physician—vast crowds are attracted to the place on account of the supposed efficacy of religious services performed on that day. The temple is beautifully situated among the mountains, but the retirement of the place has not been favorable to the pecuniary interests of the establishment. On the day of the great ceremony lawless men from the adjoining mountains band together, mingling with

the crowd of worshipers till towards the close of the day, when they simultaneously make a rush for the money. They are generally more or less successful, and sometimes get possession of the whole of the proceeds of the day's devotions.

One of the inducements held out to the deluded victims of this priestcraft at Ling-fung, is the issuing of a kind of bank-note, or letter of credit, payable in the spiritual world. They can be purchased from the priests for a few cash, or less than a cent, but they entitle the purchaser to a thousand dollars or more when presented to the proper officer in purgatory. These terms are so favorable that every worshiper buys who can at all afford the price. The documents are carefully treasured up, and at the death of the owner are placed with the body in the coffin, or transmitted to the departed spirit by being consumed in the flames. The temple at Ling-fung has recently been destroyed by fire, but a shrine has been set up for the god at another temple and the crowds of worshipers have not diminished. It was burned by order of the Prefect on account of the annual riots of which it was the occasion.

The mass of worshipers on all these occasions are women. The public thoroughfares on

such great worshiping days, may be seen crowded with these poor cripples, making their way slowly towards the place of concourse. Some indeed can afford to ride in sedan-chairs, but the number of such is very small. The walk must be a slow and painful one to those whose cramped feet compels them to hobble along with short mincing steps, and makes it difficult to preserve an upright position; yet they will often walk six miles, to reach the sacred place, and as many back on the same day; willingly encountering the toil and fatigue of the journey for the sake of the benefit they hope to obtain.

Poor old women, overcome with heat and fatigue, toil along leaning on a staff, or resting a hand upon the shoulder of some younger and stronger companion, sometimes falling down on the rough road, and again rising to pursue their toilsome way. There we may see the stout young peasant girl, the gaily dressed city lady, the modest young woman shrinking from observation, and the public prostitute blazoning forth her shame by the splendor of her attire, all moving forward on foot upon the same pious errand.

When we look at these women thus toiling on the road, and then again look at them devoutly conning over their idle prayers in

the temple, we must give them credit for sincerity. They believe some good will accrue from all this labor. They are conscious of the existence of superior powers, whose anger they would avert. There is in their hearts an abiding sense of something wanting to them—they know not what. There is an undefined dread of future judgment, and an apprehension of unknown evil, in looking down into the dark and gloomy abyss of death. Here is the secret of all this toil. Can it be other than a high crime in those to whom the light of life has been given to withhold it from those who are still blinded by Satan and enveloped in this gross darkness?

CHAPTER XV.

NUNNERIES—BUDDHISM AND ROMANISM COMPARED.

In order the better to gain access to their female adherents and attach them the more effectually to their sect, the Buddhists, like the Papists, encourage women to devote themselves to a life of purity and holiness by vows similar to those taken by the priests. This, however, in many instances, is not a voluntary act, for the supply of nuns is kept up in a great measure by purchasing young children, or receiving them as gifts from their parents, who too often are glad to be in this way relieved of the trouble and expense of their support.

The nuns are not fully received into the sisterhood until they reach their sixteenth year. Those who are received young, as most of them are, do not bind up their feet as other Chinese women do, but leave them of the natural size. They also shave the head, leaving only a small tuft of hair; and as in

other respects their garb much resembles that of the priests, one can hardly distinguish a nun from a priest.

The nuns perform religious services very much in the same manner with the priests. They are taught to read the prescribed prayers, and some of their primary religious books. Some of them acquire a very good knowledge of the Chinese written character, so as to read any ordinary Chinese book. This is an attainment made by very few Chinese women.

They have disciples among the women, to whom they give particular instructions in the duties of their religion, and in whose behalf they recite prayers. For these services they of course expect to be paid. They are looked upon with greater suspicion than the priests, and are more despised than they, for it is well understood that many of them lead profligate lives. This feature of the Buddhist religion is more opposed by the government than any other, and in some instances the laws against them are summarily executed. A case occurred some time ago at Shanghai. One of the nuns, in connection with a priest, being detected in the commission of a crime sadly inconsistent with her vows of purity and chastity, the whole sisterhood were expelled

from their abode, the establishment was broken up, and the buildings in a great measure destroyed, by order of the local authorities. A precisely similar case occurred at Ningpo, and was dealt with in the same manner.

In reviewing the features of the Buddhist sect, as we have now been considering them, no one can fail to be struck with the marked resemblance to those of the Romish Church. The priests of both these sects shave their heads, wear a peculiar garb, and are forbidden to marry. Both sects have monks who shut themselves up in cells to exclude worldly objects; and nuns who take vows of chastity, and shut themselves up like the monks. In their worship they have the same mummeries and manœuvres, bowings and genuflexions, marchings and countermarchings; the same chantings, and jingling of bells, burning of incense, lighting of candles, repetition of prayers, and pouring or sprinkling of holy water. Both pray in an unknown tongue, use beads to count the number of their prayers, go on pilgrimages, have religious processions, observe fasts by abstaining from meat, and believe penance by self-torture more necessary than penitence, which has its seat in the heart. Both pray *for* the dead, to release the soul from temporary punishment

or purgatory, and both pray *to* the dead, expecting to receive benefits through their means. Both rely on the merit of good works, and believe in works of supererogation, by which a store of merit may be laid up as an offset against sins committed. Both trust in the power of charms, amulets, and incantations, to deliver them from the effects of diabolical influences; and both are given to the worship of images, and defend the practice on the same ground; to wit, that they do not worship the image, but the object represented by it. The Papists worship Holy mother the Virgin Mary: the Buddhists, Holy Mother the Queen of Heaven. Both also carefully preserve and worship relics of holy men, setting a great value upon the bones or old garments of the canonized dead, who are regarded as unusually holy. No wonder some of the old Jesuit missionaries thought the Buddhist religion had been invented by the devil, for the express purpose of bringing a reproach upon the Romish Church. We would infer from the resemblance in the forms of worship of the two sects that the places of worship must also be much alike; and so in fact they are. The shrine and the altar, with the same gaudy tinsel and the same burning candles, and the idols but slightly different, give the

Buddhist temple and Romish chapel a very similar aspect. It is said that when the Insurgents took Nanking, and went about destroying the idol temples, they demolished the Romish churches and their idols along with the rest, all unconscious of any difference between them. It was certainly a very natural, and a very pardonable mistake.

CHAPTER XVI.

BLENDING OF THE SECTS—SOME NEGATIVE FEATURES COMMON TO ALL.

No picture of the religious notions of the Chinese would be complete which did not give a separate view of the three sects which have been noticed in the preceding pages. It must not be supposed, however, that the people are divided, by distinct and tangible lines, among these sects. There is nothing in China corresponding to the different religious denominations into which Christian nations are divided. The Chinese readily embrace some of the tenets, and observe some of the rites, of all these sects, making no account of the glaring inconsistencies and contradictions in which this involves them. It is to a certain extent true that all are Confucianists—all Tauists—all Buddhists. The same persons may be seen, now in a Buddhist temple—now in a Tauist.

A family mourning for a deceased member may call in the Buddhist priests to-day to pray for the soul of the deceased, and to-morrow the Tauist; or both may be called at the same time to perform the services they think needful for the dead.

The explanation of this fact is to be found, probably, in a felt consciousness of some defect in them all. There is in the minds of the mass of the people such a want of confidence in the truth of the doctrines taught, or in the power of the deities worshiped, by these sects, that they adopt the whole, so that if they fail in one place, they may be more successful in another. They are like drowning men who catch at every straw that comes within reach.

On the same principle they are often willing to embrace the Christian religion. They would have no objections to add Christ as another deity to their pantheon. Then, if Buddha fails them at last, Christ may help them. For all they know, this God of the foreigners may have more power than any of their own; and at any rate it can do no harm to secure his favor. Therefore they sometimes ask what they must do to become disciples of Jesus. They are willing to repeat any prayers, observe any fasts, and make any

number of prostrations, that may be required. But when told that no external ceremony will of itself avail, and that if they would trust in Jesus they must give up Buddha, then, like the rich young man who was told to sell all that he had and follow Jesus, they go away sorrowful, for they cannot give up their idols.

The real religion, therefore, of the great majority of the Chinese, is an incoherent mixture of the three sects. They have, however, added to this many notions and superstitions of their own, which are not peculiar to any of the sects. To finish our picture of their religion, it will be necessary to describe these popular superstitions. Before doing so, however, it may be well to notice some important negative features of Chinese religion which are common to all their sects, and to all their philosophical systems.

The philosophers have much to say of the *Yin* and the *Yang*—the male and the female principles in nature, but these speculations have not led them to exalt licentiousness to the position of a virtue. There is nothing in the religious systems of the Chinese to encourage licentiousness. They have no books filled with accounts of the impure conduct, and diabolical crimes, of their gods. In their temples nothing is seen that is inconsistent with modesty

—nothing which a chaste woman need blush to look at. There is no obscene picture paraded on the walls, no naked statue exposed to public gaze. The images of their gods are all in full dress. It may be safely said that no indecent exhibition would be allowed by the magistrates, and public opinion would universally cry out against it.

How different is this from India, where licentiousness is deified, and its unclean symbol made an object of worship! How different too from the obscene rites once practised in the temples of ancient Greece and Rome, and many other heathen nations!

It must not, however, be inferred from this that the Chinese are not, in practice, given to uncleanness. In theory, indeed, they make much of female modesty and delicacy. Women are forbidden, by the strict laws of etiquette, to mingle promiscuously with men, or even to be seen by any others than those of their own immediate household. This cannot, of course, be observed rigidly by any but the wealthy, but the rule, nevertheless, exerts a potent influence upon all classes, and undoubtedly operates as a restraint upon crime. Licentiousness prevails to a deplorable extent, but it is branded with disgrace, in books at least. Public opinion, also, is of course

against it, but it is not so strongly expressed as to impose much restraint upon the mass of the people. But whatever the extent of the practice, it is not at all countenanced by their religion.

Another feature of Chinese religion is the absence of expiatory sacrifices. Not only are there no human sacrifices, as in India, but there is no such thing as an offering with a view to atonement for sin. There is no car of Juggernaut crushing human victims under its wheels; no offering up of children to satisfy the demands of any voracious Moloch. The offerings presented are designed, indeed, to secure the favor of the gods, but not by atoning for sin. Indeed, their ideas of sin are such that they cannot entertain the idea of a proper atonement. Sin is not, in their view, committed so much against God, as against man. The gods are merely the magistrates by whom such offences are punished; and if the punishment is remitted, the remission is to be obtained much in the same way as from earthly rulers, by bribery or flattery, which are presented or expressed by means of offerings. The Chinese word for sin is the same that is used for a violation of etiquette, or a neglect of politeness, and sin is looked upon as really little more serious in its nature,

although it may be in its consequences, than a disregard of the ceremonious etiquette which they think of so much importance.

With such views of sin it is not strange that they should suppose their deities capable of being easily induced to overlook it. In fact, they look to the gods for protection while carrying out some plan of outrageous wickedness just as confidently as in performing deeds of charity and love. Pirates often anchor their vessels near the island of Puto, which is remote from the main land, and while there are sure to be amongst the most faithful worshipers in the temples of that sacred island. They present their prayers and offerings with all apparent sincerity and earnestness, and are as confident of thus securing the favor and protection of the gods while carrying on their horrid work as are the farmers when they pray for fruitful seasons. These offerings, so far from being designed as an atonement for sin, are intended to secure protection in the commission of crime.

CHAPTER XVII.

POPULAR DEITIES—HEAVEN AND EARTH—GOD OF THE KITCHEN—THE RAIN DRAGON.

In the account which has been given of the three religious sects, are some notices of several of the gods worshiped by them; but many deities are worshiped which cannot be considered as the property of any of the sects. It would be an endless task to notice, ever so briefly, the numberless objects of their worship; but it will be proper to give a brief account of some of those most commonly resorted to by the devout. This will be done without any reference to sect, as these deities may be properly regarded as part and parcel of what may be called the popular religion, which we now wish to describe.

The whole realm of nature is filled with deities. There are gods celestial and gods terrestrial, almost without number; but most

people are content to worship but a small number of them, and these only at long intervals. But all feel it a duty to worship Heaven and Earth. While they are generally ready to admit the folly of worshiping images, they cannot so easily be convinced that it is not right and necessary to worship the great pair which they regard as the joint source of all things.

It is not an uncommon practice for some member of a family to perform this worship every evening—generally the head of the household. Perhaps it is an old grey-headed man. He appears at the door of his house with two or three burning incense sticks clasped in his hands. Reverently bowing his head low towards the earth, at the same time waving his incense, he mutters over the words of his prayer. Then turning back towards his house he inserts the incense-sticks into the earth, or into a small censer filled with sand, by the side of his door-sill. The service is a very brief one, not always accompanied by any prayer at all; but it shows a sense of dependence upon a higher power, which is not always felt, or acknowledged by any act of homage, by men who take pride in their superiority to the heathen.

At Ningpo there is a singular custom,

called "giving notice to the earth," based upon the worship of the earth god, called Tu-di-pu-sah, who is not, however, to be confounded with the Earth as worshiped in connection with Heaven. A man has a house to build, a tomb to prepare, or a well to dig. Before venturing to dig, and thus wound and lacerate the face of the earthy deity, he must give notice to his godship of his intention. This notice is of course accompanied by suitable ceremonies. It is as if he would say: "I humbly beg your pardon, sir, for the rudeness I am about to commit. I would not be guilty of such an act if it were not necessary; but since it is so, I beg you will believe that I do not mean any offence, and grant me your assistance in my undertaking."

To satisfy the god, a priest is called in to read the prayers and conduct the services. Offerings of fowls, pork, or goat's flesh are spread upon a table, with burning incense, before which the needful prostrations are performed. Then the priest proceeds to the points where the ground is to be broken, and gives notice accordingly. He is followed by the master of the house with burning incense, who worships at each place. After him comes a servant with a hoe, and turns up the soil. Lest this should not be effectual, charms,

printed or written on yellow paper, are pasted up on the premises, which are expected to ward off evil influences from all sources.

The notion that the god is offended by digging the ground has furnished a means of accounting for diseases of children in certain cases; and also suggests a cure. The disease is attributed to an offence against this god committed by digging while at play. The cure is to burn some written charms appropriate to the case, and let the patient drink the ashes in tea.

The God of the Kitchen is an object of almost universal worship. No family would feel safe without a shrine over the cooking range for this important and influential member of the household. He is feared rather than respected, and is looked upon more as a spy than as a protector. Near the close of the year—the 23d of the twelfth month—he takes his departure from earth for a short time, in order to make to the powers above his report of the family transactions during the year. On this day, therefore, special honors are paid to him, in order to secure a favorable report. A paper image of the god is burnt in a pile of mock money, and thus he ascends to heaven. On the last day of the year he returns from his errand, and care is taken to have his shrine

newly painted and decorated, and to provide a new image to receive him, so that he may begin the new year in good humor. He is greeted by the family with appropriate ceremonies. Besides these annual ceremonies in his honor, he is commonly worshiped on the 1st and 15th of each month—that is, at the new and full moons.

The rain-making deity—the *Great Dragon* from whose capacious mouth the waters are spouted forth, which descend upon the earth in the form of rain—is an object of special worship by those who cultivate the soil. He is not often worshiped, however, unless his power is felt, either by the absence of rain, or by too abundant a supply. Sometimes the farmers are earnestly begging him to give them more rain; sometimes to give them less.

As the magistrates are, to some extent, responsible for the fruitfulness or barrenness of the seasons, they must take such measures as will be calculated to procure abundant crops. In case of drought, one of the measures resorted to by the magistrates is to issue proclamations forbidding the slaughter of animals. They first prohibit the slaughter of the larger animals, as hogs and goats. If the drought still continues, they extend their protection to the poultry. Occasionally they

go a step further, and close the fish markets, putting a stop to the occupation of the fishermen. This is not of the nature of a fast, for it is not the eating of animal food, but the slaughter of animals, that is forbidden. The object is not so much to afflict themselves and exercise self-denial, as to exhibit the Buddhist virtue of compassion to animals. A man may eat meat if it has been already slaughtered; but woe to the man who, at such a time, is found shedding the blood of a pig, or wringing off the head of a fowl. He must expiate his crime in prison, or be ignominiously exposed to public gaze in the *cangue*, or undergo the more severe punishment inflicted with the bamboo. People are always found, however, who are willing to risk these unpleasant consequences; as they are also to offend the farmers and the gods; but one effect of such prohibitions always is to raise the price of pork.

In addition to these measures, it is sometimes ordered that the south gate of the city shall be closed. During a severe drought in the summer of 1856, the District Magistrate at Shanghae issued an order to that effect. The following language is from his proclamation as found translated in the *North China Herald*, an English newspaper published at

Shanghae: "On account of the long drought, I, the District Magistrate, have been fasting and offering sacrifice, and in company with the Tautai of this place and others, have been walking the streets solemnly engaged in prayer. On inquiry, it seems that as the heat comes from the south, the great south gate ought to be shut, which will therefore be the case from the 23d inst. [July], until the rain falls, when it will be opened again."

Again he says: "As the drought has been of long continuance, I, the Magistrate of the district, feel deeply ashamed. I am unable to conciliate Heaven, and am agitated and profoundly distressed on account of it."

In addition to these means of propitiating the angry gods, direct supplications are not neglected. The magistrates repair to the temples daily, and offer up prayers and sacrifices. Those of Ningpo sometimes go to Puto to implore the favor of the gods residing in that sacred island, but ordinarily they confine their devotions to one of the city temples. In the early morning a long procession may be seen moving through the streets of Ningpo, in the direction of one of the large temples. In front are runners in official caps, lictors with chains and implements of punishment. Then the sedan-chair of the Tautai, followed by at-

tendants, on foot, in sedans, and on horseback. They enter the temple, and go through with the prostrations and ceremonies prescribed by the ritual. The offerings of wine, rice, and vegetables, with fruits and flowers, are placed upon tables before the shrines. The rice is often worked up into figures of pigs, goats, and fowls. On one of the tables is a coarse brown earthen vessel, covered with a framework of wire gauze. Before this the magistrate, in the presence of his suite, falls upon his knees and "knocks head" while prayers are offered up imploring that the "sweet showers" may descend. What mysterious power is connected with that ill-looking vessel, that so commands the devotion of this grave, portly, elegantly attired personage? It contains a living representative of the Dragon, an unsightly goby, which but yesterday was wriggling in the mud on the river bank, all unconscious of the high honor that awaited it. Here is a beautiful development of that noble "natural religion," so much applauded by some who think themselves wise. With all the aid of a philosophy carefully elaborated through thousands of years of study, it ends in the worship of a fish.

The devotions of the magistrates are assisted by those of the people. Thus, in the procla-

mation above referred to, the magistrate says: "Among the people resident in the city, each family now keeps erected at the front door of the house a tablet on which is inscribed, "To the Dragon King of the Five Lakes and the Four Seas." Before this tablet, on an altar of incense, they lay out their sacrificial offerings to propitiate the gods. Close by their doors they also set up small yellow flags, on which are written sentences like the following: "With sincerity of heart we pray that abundance of rain may descend."

The people also get up frequent processions in case of drought, with a view to make some impression on the compassionate feelings of the gods. The farmers, who feel the pressure most sensibly, are specially active in these measures. They may be seen marching in procession, each man bearing some token of his desires. Most of them bear a long bamboo sapling, with a bunch of withered leaves at the top, and a piece of cloth attached to it near the middle. Some have banners and small flags with some inscription containing a prayer for rain. These are accompanied by embroidered canopies, sedan-chairs, lanterns, and other paraphernalia of idolatry, including generally a sedan-chair—perhaps several—

containing an idol with a table before him on which incense is kept burning. The sound of drums, trumpets, cymbals, conch-shells, and gongs, constitutes the music of the procession. Sometimes these processions march from the country into the city and visit some of the principal temples, and the official residences of the magistrates. When they thus enter the court of an officer's residence, he is expected to appear in his official costume, and worship in presence of the crowd. Sometimes a huge figure of a dragon, made of paper or cloth, is borne through the streets, with sound of gongs and trumpets.

The prayers thus offered by these men are certainly sincere. Looking upon that solemn procession, we cannot but be impressed with the look of sadness which rests upon the bronzed faces of those sunburnt farmers. It is evident that they are in earnest. They must have rain. With many of them it is a question almost of life and death, for they are poor; and a failure of the crops is sure to entail upon them, and upon their wives and children, a year of suffering, if not of absolute starvation. In the region of Ningpo the pressure of a long-continued drought is the more immediate, from the fact, that they are en-

tirely dependent for drinking-water upon the supplies furnished by the rains. Rain-water is there used for this purpose, the wells and streams not being available. No wonder their countenances look sad when the rains are withheld.

When all these means of procuring rain fail them, another method is sometimes tried. The gods who are responsible for the weather are removed from their seats in the temple, and placed upon a stand in the temple court. There they may experience for themselves the discomfort of exposure, without a cover, to the rays of a broiling sun. When the object is to procure a cessation of rain, the same means are employed. Protection of animal life, with processions and prayers, are resorted to; and, finally, the exposure of the obstinate deities to the drenching rain, until they yield to the wishes of their worshipers.

These calamities are ascribed to the wrath of the gods on account of the sins of the people. Thus one proclamation says—"Verily it must be that these men, people and officers, have by their own wickedness provoked the wrath of the gods; and now, if they should have recourse to a thousand devices, yet how can they possibly change the mind of Heaven?"

Another proclamation, issued at Shanghae in 1856, asserts, that a gentleman named Hu had died in the province of Shantung, and on the third day afterwards rose to life again, declaring that he had received instructions from the Holy Sovereign Prince Kwan—the god of war—certain instructions. He says—"The judgments of Heaven are now abroad, and this year, either by the sword and soldiers, or by disease, eight or nine tenths of the people are to perish. If, however, they will engage and depend on the Great Mistress of the Southern Sea, and the Great White Star Prince, then these two divinities will interpose their strength to effect a deliverance, will scrutinize the good and evil deeds of the people, and if they find these nearly balanced the judgment of Heaven shall in some degree be diminished.

"On the 9th, 19th, and 29th of each month the people must burn incense toward the south. Then kneeling and worshiping, they must swear that they will be true and faithful, dutiful to their parents, and affectionate to their brothers, and likewise will abstain from the slaughter of all living creatures, and perform rightly every appropriate duty, then their petitions may be heard, and pardon and indulgence be granted to them."

CHAPTER XVIII.

GOD OF THUNDER—GOD OF WEALTH AND OTHERS —GODS OF THE FIVE QUARTERS—RELIGIOUS PROCESSIONS.

Each department of nature has its presiding deity. The God of Thunder is, of course, an object of dread. It is not strange that the mysterious power whose awful voice they hear above the storm, rolling and crashing through the sky, should strike an ignorant and superstitious people with terror. When they see his fiery bolts hurled upon the earth it is not strange that they are impelled to worship it, that they may avert a danger which they feel they are utterly powerless to escape by any effort of their own. Many are in the habit of observing a fast on any day on which they hear the sound of thunder—especially the old women. The birthday of this deity is observed with great pomp and parade, at a large Táuist temple at Ningpo, but they have not discovered, it would seem,

how old he is. It is the universal belief, that no one is ever struck dead by the power of this mighty deity, except as a punishment for crime; and however upright a man may have been supposed to be, his death by lightning is, in the estimation of every Chinese, proof positive that he has been guilty of some high offence, for which the gods would not suffer him to live.

One of the gods most worshiped in China, is one who seems to have extended his dominion even into Christian lands. It is the god of Wealth. In every tradesman's shop a shrine for this influential god is indispensable to success in business, for he it is who distributes wealth at his pleasure. He is worshiped constantly with more or less formality, but on his birthday in the third month, and on the 26th of every month, he is honored with special services.

So also in every junk or boat, large or small, there is a shrine for the goddess who presides over sailors. Every evening about sunset, there is a regular service on board the large vessels, accompanied with beating of gongs, and burning of mock paper money, which is thrown in full blaze into the water. These services are more punctually performed by sailors of the south, than by those of the north.

Literary men look to the god of Literature for success at the literary examinations, and in all their literary undertakings. Physicians pay court to the ancient patron of their art. Carpenters place the man who first taught and practised their craft, among the powers above, and trust to him to help them in their enterprises. Those engaged in rearing silkworms, must not neglect to pay homage to the goddess whose province it is to watch over this important branch of industry.

The gods who seem to be most feared are the gods of the "five quarters;" that is, of the north, south, east, west, and centre. They are supposed to exercise control over pestilential diseases. The most costly of all their festivals is in honor of these dreaded angels of death. It is observed regularly in the fourth month, and is the great religious festival of the year. It is celebrated by a grand procession, called the Tu-Shin Hwuy. At Ningpo the decorations are very gaudy, and the expenses, therefore, heavy. The money is raised by contributions from the different guilds of tradesmen. The rivalry between them has the effect of drawing from them much larger sums than mere superstition could procure. The sum raised annually for this purpose must amount to many thou-

sand dollars, probably hundreds of thousands. The features of the procession in the same place are much the same from year to year. The following is an account of one which took place at Ningpo on the 8th of May, 1846.

In order to have a good view of the procession, we obtained a place in an upper room in the house of an acquaintance. We were after a long time informed, however, that for some reason the procession would not pass through that street, and that it would be necessary to obtain a position in some other street. This appeared rather a formidable undertaking, for we had for some time been amusing ourselves with watching the progress of the narrow current of passers-by, which hour after hour flowed laboriously on through the dense mass of human beings which was hemmed in between the houses of the narrow street. How were our ladies to make their way through such a crowd? We experienced little difficulty. As soon as the foreign ladies made their appearance each man seemed to compress his limbs into the smallest possible compass; and the crowd, pressing to the right and left with all their strength, succeeded in opening a narrow passage.

Passing through a floorless shop, and

mounting a dark narrow staircase, we entered a loft, the roof and sides of which were black with smoke, and the flooring covered with the filth of years. The side of the room next the street was closed in through its whole length with sliding shutters. Removing these, our position commanded a view of the street for some distance. Beneath us was a dense mass of human heads extending as far as we could see, waving like a field of grain moved by the wind. The immense crowd, filling every nook and corner, and rising with every elevation, presented a very peculiar appearance. There is something in a Chinese crowd that is most impressive. It is not a mere mass of *hats*, for hats are not worn in summer, but a collection of human heads and faces. Those shaven heads uncovered, and those upturned faces; who could look upon them without emotion? Each one represents a human mind and soul that shall live for ever, or die an endless death!

Yet it is impossible not to laugh. There is jostling and pushing, loud talking and screaming, and the incessant hum of many voices. Looking down from above we see a forest of long tobacco pipes, for every man is armed with one, which the pressure of the crowd obliges him to hold up in an elevated

position. The long queue is to each man an object of special concern. Here is a black shining tail, tipped with silk braid, grasped firmly in the hands in front; here another carefully coiled around the neck; and there a third clenched between the teeth; while the owner of a fourth may be seen with his head thrown back, and face looking upward, struggling to disengage this inconvenient appendage from its entanglement among the shoulders of the men in his rear. Yet universal good humor prevails.

Now comes the procession. It is preceded and guarded by men holding little ratans with small white flags attached, to keep off the crowd. The scene beggars description. There were thousands of toys and trinkets, and gaudy colors, and fantastic shapes—a perfect chaos of sights and sounds—of embroidered silks and brilliant tassels, of glittering pewter, and shining brass, and flowers, and figures of men, with sound of innumerable drums, and cymbals, and gongs, and shrill trumpets, and explosions of gunpowder, keeping up an incessant din of a kind to make one feel as if standing on the borders of Hades.

There were immense silk canopies elegantly embroidered, horses loaded down with gaudy ornaments, and mounted by boys in tawdry

dresses; men with immense satanic looking masks; men on stilts, covered with cut paper so as to look like huge ostriches flapping their wings, and occasionally sending forth clouds of smoke from their long beaks; high tiers of glass lanterns and glass cases inclosing various ornaments; and seven immense dragons, some of them of rich silk, and a hundred and fifty feet long, their ferocious aspect and ponderous size threatening destruction to all who might come in their way.

But the chief points of attraction are the richly decorated cars, on which young girls and boys are seen riding in various positions, in which they seem to be floating on thin air, or resting on a support so frail as to seem incapable of sustaining anything so gross as flesh and blood. The following are specimens:

A girl with a violin and guitar crossed and tied to her back, on one of which was seated a little girl, and on the other a little boy.

A girl standing on one foot on the head of a small brazen serpent, held in the hand of another girl.

A girl standing on the circumference of a ring, placed vertically and at right angles upon the rim of another ring, the latter being held in the hand of a little girl.

A root, growing from a glass globe, containing living gold fish, on each of the two branches of which was seated a little girl.

The secret of these positions everybody knew, though the real support was carefully and skillfully concealed. Strong iron bars were hidden under the wide-flowing garments of the girls, so that they, in fact, had very firm and comfortable seats.

Similar processions are got up on this occasion in every large village, though less imposing in their character. Many other such processions occur on various occasions, and sometimes are observed for some special object, but they are not often on so large and expensive a scale.

The God of Fire is an object of special dread and consideration. Large temples are erected for him, and twice every year, at the vernal equinox and winter solstice, there are general services in his honor. On the former occasion the special object is to pray for preservation from fire. On the other occasion they return thanks for having escaped the destructive element.

On the night of the 15th of January, 1853, a fire broke out in Shanghae, which destroyed forty or fifty thousand dollars' worth of property. On the next day the owners of the

adjoining buildings which escaped the flames, together with their tenants, went to the Ho-shin-miau, the temple of the God of Fire, to return thanks for their preservation. They expended some two hundred dollars in employing Táuist priests to perform the ceremonies appropriate to the occasion. About two weeks afterwards another fire broke out in the same neighborhood, and destroyed property to the amount of eighty thousand dollars. Many of the sufferers were those who had just been so earnest in their devotions before the fiery deity, and they were very much enraged at him for not protecting them. They vowed that they would never worship him again. During this fire the presiding god of that neighborhood was burnt up in his shrine; and the fire originated from the flame of a wax candle burning before an image of the God of the Kitchen. It would seem that such demonstrations of the folly of trusting in idols would drive them from their idol worship. But to whom then shall they go! They know of no better way.

It so happened that on this occasion, the house which was the northern limit of the first fire, was the southern limit of the second. The inference therefore is that its occupant was a very virtuous man. His house was left stand-

ing alone, surrounded on both sides by smoked and blackened ruins.

When a house appears to be in danger from a fire in its vicinity, the owner often vows to have a number of theatrical performances at his own expense, in honor of the god of fire. Whether his house escapes or not he is expected to pay his vow.

The Chinese must be regarded as a most religious people, if a judgment is to be formed from the number of their temples. They are found in almost every street of the large cities, and no considerable village is without its temple. In the rural districts they are scattered over the country in every direction, and form a prominent feature in every landscape. The country is divided into what we would call parishes, so that every family has a special interest in some temple to which he may be said to belong, and to the support of which, directly or indirectly, he contributes. These temples are built by subscription, and are commonly dedicated to some particular deity, though generally containing a number of images, sometimes even several hundred. They are maintained sometimes by subscription, sometimes by the produce of lands set apart for the purpose. Public ceremonies are performed at stated times, and casual worship-

ers are frequently found there to seek a favor or fulfill a vow.

These temples are supposed to be intimately connected with the prosperity of the people, and they seem to think there is no safety for them except under the shadow of these sacred buildings. They are not satisfied therefore with the large temples. Small ones are erected by the roadside, or in the fields. Small shrines too are often seen by the wayside, affording protection to some idol-god, and inviting the homage of the passing traveller. In the small rest-houses, which are erected at short intervals on every public road of any importance, there is generally found an image representing the deity to whose protection the place is committed.

The following inscriptions, found by one of the missionaries at Ningpo, in a small rural temple, covering altogether an area of about forty feet square, may serve to give some idea of the nature of the trust reposed in these farmer deities :

"Truly the power of these gods is wonderful."

"Protect our vigorous people."

"He who prays has great happiness."

"Warm winds, grateful rain."

"Bestow happiness."
"These alone preside over fruits."
"Send down good fortune."

It will be seen from the foregoing account, that the expense of erecting and maintaining these temples, and of keeping up the various services, processions, and offerings must be very great. The Chinese are a penurious money-loving people, but no complaints are heard of the demands made upon the purse by their religion. It is an expense as necessary as that for food and raiment. May not those who complain of the demands of Christianity for money, learn a lesson of liberality from the heathen?

CHAPTER XIX.

ANCESTRAL WORSHIP—WORSHIP AT THE TOMBS.

The gods are not the only beings of the spiritual world whose favor is important. The spirits of the dead generally must be conciliated. To the Chinese the spiritual world is a present reality. To him the whole realm of nature teems with spirits, good and bad, capable of doing good and inflicting injury. To these invisible beings, whether ranked among the gods, or composing part of the common herd of spirits, he refers all his calamities. To them he has recourse to obtain deliverance from evils feared, or evils already upon him. He can never therefore enjoy a sense of security, for when he has secured the good will of one or many of these invisible spirits, there remain thousands of others from whose malice or necessities he may suffer injury.

The Chinese notion of the spiritual world, is that it is the counterpart of this. Its inhabi-

tants are animated by the same feelings, and subject to the same wants which they experienced here. This notion has given rise to many superstitious practices in connection with what may be considered the great distinguishing feature of Chinese religion, the worhip of ancestors.

The ancestral worship of the Chinese is undoubtedly idolatrous. They worship their ancestors in the same manner, and with much the same feelings, with which they worship their gods. There are in both cases the same offerings, the same prostrations, and often, too, the same or similar prayers.

It is true, however, that the worshiper feels that he is conferring a favor on the departed spirit, for which he expects a reward from Heaven, as well as from the worshiped spirit itself. The duty of children to their parents never ceases. The obligations of filial piety demand reverence and obedience during the parent's life, and suitable attention after death, both to the body and the spirit. Food and raiment, and whatever else may be necessary to the repose of the departed spirit, must be provided by children and children's children, to remote generations.

Immediately after death, priests are called in to offer up prayers for the repose of the

deceased. Tables are placed before the corpse, on which offerings of rice, tea, meats and vegetables are spread, and candles and incense are kept burning. On the third day the body is laid in its coffin, arrayed in its best garments, and then they are ready for the funeral whenever a lucky day is found. In the meantime, if the family be wealthy, the offerings, and burning candles, and prayers are continued daily, until the body is interred. During this period, prior to the burial, the immediate relatives and friends of the family perform, at intervals, the ceremony of bowing down before the coffin; but the duty is particularly incumbent on the children. At the grave similar services are performed, and mock paper money and paper garments, are transmitted through the flames to the spirit in the other world. Often too, when the circumstances of the family permit it, miniature paper furniture, sedan-chairs, servants, utensils, and other articles are sent in the same way to the deceased, in the full belief that they will in this way reach him, and minister to his necessities.

The period called Tsing-ming—"Pure and Bright"—which occurs about the fifth of April, is the time at which the whole population worship at the tombs. During this period

groups may be seen here and there, engaged in the performance of this duty. Some families attend to these rites also at the winter solstice, and in the seventh month. Until a grave is three years old the females of the family are expected to attend along with the males, but after that they are held excused from the duty.

There would be something interesting in the sight of these family groups, gathered at the tombs of their venerated dead, if they could but be dissociated from the sin. An aged patriarch, it may be, with his children, and children's children, have met to do homage to the memory of their forefathers, at the spot most intimately associated with them. The group consists, perhaps, of an old man, whose trembling step indicates that he must himself be soon numbered with the dead, several of his sons in the prime of manhood, accompanied by their sons, young men and little boys, all ready to take part in the ceremony. The ceremonial dress worn on these occasions consists of an outer robe of silk or satin, except where poverty forbids, and a cap, surmounted by a rich red silk tassel.

A table is placed before the tomb, and on it are laid the various articles of food intended for the offering, together with incense sticks

and candles. A sacrifice is first offered to the earth, a portion of which is thrown out towards the four points of the compass, for the benefit of any wandering ghosts from the neighboring tombs who may happen to be near. They are expected, in return for this polite attention, to keep off, and not disturb the ancestral spirits at their meal. This done, the eldest of the family bows before the table, and is followed in order by the younger worshipers.

Then the paper money, paper clothes, and other articles are sent off through the flames to the spiritual world. Sometimes the money is inclosed in a large envelope, on which is inscribed the name of the person for whom it is intended. After this, long strips of white and red paper, cut so as to represent strings of copper cash, are tied to a stick, which is stuck into the earth on top of the tomb, and left fluttering in the breeze, as an evidence to the living and the dead, that the duties of filial piety have not been neglected.

This paper money is of a very economical kind. It represents generally the bars of silver called sycee, and is made of paper covered with tinfoil, or similar material, and folded in such a manner as to resemble the shape of the real silver. This light and fragile paper money is strung on threads, and burnt in

large bundles composed of many strings tied together. In the families of the poorer classes the women devote much of their spare time to the manufacture of this important article, which always finds a ready sale.

The theory of the Chinese is, that a man has three souls, one of which, at death, remains with the body, another with the tablet retained in the family mansion, and the third enters the spiritual world. It is not enough, therefore, to worship at the tombs. In every respectable family there is an ancestral hall or shrine, in which the tablets of the family ancestors are placed. This tablet is a small board, neatly varnished, on which is written, commonly in gilt letters, the name of the deceased. Sometimes in the more wealthy families, a separate room or building is set apart for these ancestral tablets, but more commonly a small shrine is placed against the back wall, or partition of the room used as a reception-hall for guests. The ordinary worship before this shrine consists only of the usual bowing, and the burning of a few incense sticks.

The universal conviction that these services are essential to the peace and comfort of the departed spirit is, no doubt, the principal reason of that strong desire for posterity which is characteristic of the Chinese. This desire is

in many cases the sole reason for marrying more than one wife. Sometimes a son is adopted into a family that he may perform the ancestral rites, and sometimes boys are stolen for the purpose of being thus adopted. It is male descendants that are wanted, because daughters are not expected to perform these rites, and when they marry they belong to the husband's family. They are therefore not important so far as this object is concerned.

CHAPTER XX.

ANCESTRAL TEMPLES—LANDS SET APART FOR THE DEAD—CALLING BACK THE SPIRIT—SWEEPING AWAY THE SPIRIT—SPIRITUAL MARRIAGES—FEEDING THE GHOSTS.

Besides the ancestral hall in the dwelling-house, many families have also an ancestral temple. Many of these temples are large and costly buildings, and they are often decorated with a richness and elegance seldom seen in the public temples. These buildings have in most instances been erected by former generations, and some of them have been maintained for hundreds of years. In most cases, indeed, the original families have increased; so that many families, more or less nearly related, and all bearing the same name, claim an interest in these buildings, and in the advantages connected with them. In many instances the families have become poor, and the evidence of this is often seen in the dilapidated state of

the ancestral temple; but they are commonly kept in good repair. There are not many instances in which these buildings are diverted from their original purpose. Avarice might prompt to a sale, but a superstitious fear of the consequences would generally prevent it. The number of persons interested, too, is generally so great, that it is not easy to secure the necessary unanimity.

Yet at Ningpo a family was found willing at first to rent, and afterwards to sell, their ancestral temple. The temple was built in a large inclosure, surrounded by a high brick wall, and the property was very valuable. The amount of money paid for it, in connection with the necessities of the family, overcame all their fears, both of the departed spirits and of the public odium. The temple is now used by the Presbyterian Mission of Ningpo as a printing-office, and many millions of pages of Christian tracts, and of the Bible, have gone forth from this ancestral hall, consecrated by some heathen, long since gone to his account, to the work of providing for the wants of the soul after death. May many souls, in ages yet to come, rejoice in that better provision for the wants of the soul, for the dissemination of which it is now employed.

The offerings presented to the dead are con-

sidered important to the repose of the departed spirit, and every Chinese is therefore anxious to die in the assurance that this matter will be attended to. Nor are they always willing, if they can avoid it, to leave this to the contingencies of the varying fortunes of their posterity. With the view of securing the proper attention to the wants of the spirit after death, it is not uncommon for men who have a little property to leave to their heirs, to reserve a small portion for themselves; unless some such provision has already been made by some of the family ancestors of a former generation. A small piece of land is designated, the produce of which is to be employed, so far as necessary, for providing the annual ancestral offerings. The land thus set apart is cultivated by the heirs in rotation, in the order of their ages. This order is maintained from generation to generation. As the families are multiplied with the lapse of time, and divided into distinct and separate branches, each branch has its turn for ploughing the ancestral field, and offering the prescribed sacrifices.

This duty is commonly attended with some pecuniary advantage, though it may also be attended with some loss. The person who has charge of the land is allowed to appropri-

ate to himself all that remains after defraying the expenses of the ancestral offerings for the year. But he is expected to invite the other families of the clan to feast upon the viands offered to the dead. He must therefore regulate these offerings, not only by the number of the departed spirits to be provided for, but by the number of the living who are to partake of the feast. The circle of relatives having a right to be invited to this feast is however made so small that, in most cases, the produce of the land more than covers the expense of the entertainment.

In this way the worship of ancestors may be a source of temptation to Chinese Christians, both by the odium consequent on neglecting it, and by the pecuniary advantage which they may, in some instances, be obliged to forego if they refuse to present the required offerings.

The amount of land thus set apart for the ancestral offerings must be very great. In the north of China, especially in the immediate vicinity of large cities, a large proportion of the land may be considered as belonging to the dead. The ancestral temples, the sacred fields, the extensive burying-grounds of the rich, the spacious tombs of the middling classes, and the numberless graves of the

poor, cause a very material deduction from the available resources of the living. If all the graves in the immediate vicinity of Ningpo were collected into one burying-ground, the city of the dead would be considerably larger than the city of the living. Nothing but a firm conviction of its importance to their welfare could induce a people so penurious, and so poor, to waste so much of their fertile land by unnecessarily employing it for the sepulture of the dead.

The Chinese seldom remove with their families from one province to another, with the intention of planting themselves permanently in their new home. When business calls them away, even if the absence be prolonged for years, they generally leave the family behind; or if not, they cherish the purpose of returning again, in due time, to the place of their nativity. They deem it important to have their bodies buried in the place where their posterity are to live, so that they may not be left without the usual offerings; and this is, no doubt, one reason why they cling so tenaciously to their native place.

When a man dies abroad the body is always removed, if the family can meet the expense, to its native town. It is for this reason, probably, that the dead bodies of Chinese have

been taken back to China from California, notwithstanding the heavy expense of such a removal. Sometimes the body is burnt, and the ashes carried back to the family burying-place. In most cases, however, they are satisfied with merely, as they say, "calling back the spirit." In the case of one lost at sea, this is the only remedy. In order to accomplish this object the assistance of the priests is necessary, and the ceremony must be performed, if possible, on the bank of some stream of water, since the watercourses are the great highways of travel by which the spirit may be expected to return.

The priests, with some members of the family, repair to the river bank. One of the group holds in his hand a long bamboo sapling, with a few green branches at the top. On these branches a looking-glass, a small package of rice, and a suit of clothes are suspended. The clothes, if possible, are such as have been worn by the deceased. The priests chant their prayers and spells in the direction of the place at which the person died. The din of gongs, cymbals, drums, and harsh musical instruments, serves to guide the absent spirit to its place. It takes up its abode in the old familiar garment, and then the procession returns home with their prize, and the

spirit attaches itself to the tablet previously prepared for its use.

It is not to be supposed that these rites are for all the dead. Children are expected to pay this homage to their parents and ancestors, but nothing of the kind is required or expected from the parent to the child. Unmarried children are buried without much ceremony, and, as a general rule, no provision is made in their case for the necessities of the soul. On the death of very young children, so far from providing for them, they have a ceremony, the object of which is just the opposite of that last described. Great pains are taken to drive away the spirit, and the little one, lately so much loved, is regarded as an enemy. Superstition not only sets aside the dictates of reason and common sense, and runs counter to the laws of God, but also comes between the yearnings of natural affection and its proper object, and severs the tenderest ties by which human hearts can be bound together.

A little child has died. No cries or loud lamentations betoken the sorrow of the bereaved parent; but there are deafening noises of powder-crackers, gongs and cymbals. This is designed to frighten the spirit from the house. To insure this effect, a priest of the

Táu sect is called in to chant prayers, and use the magic spells which drive away ghosts and monstrous appearances. The priest first takes a new broom and burns it to ashes, after which he proceeds with his incantations. The incantations finished, he takes a broom in his hand, carries it a hundred paces from the door, and throws it off as far as he can. Thus the ceremony is ended, the little one is "swept away," and the family is secured from the intrusion of the spiteful and malignant spirit which had been cherished in its bosom.

But why all this effort to terrify the soul of the deceased child? It is the offspring of superstition. It is supposed that in some former state of existence the child had received an injury from one or both of the parents, for which it desired to be revenged; or that it had some claim upon them for a debt for which it was determined to obtain payment. It was for some such purpose as this that the child came into this world, and quartered itself upon the parents, subjecting them to much trouble and expense, and then leaving them before reaching an age at which its services could, in any measure, repay them for their pains. This is the view taken, when a child dies under the age of sixteen, and the fear is that it may again be born, for a similar pur-

pose, as the child of the same parents. It is thus that their ignorance of the origin of our race, and of all that relates to the state of the dead, leads heathen parents to do violence to any feeling of natural affection which may have bound them to their offspring.

It must be said, however, to the honor of human nature, that some Chinese mothers manifest the genuine yearnings of a mother's heart, and refuse to allow the spirit of the beloved child to be thus unfeelingly driven off.

The treatment of the bodies of these little ones is such as might be expected from the fact that they are looked upon as enemies. Elder children are allowed a coffin, though a very poor one, but it is commonly laid upon the surface of the ground without burial, or any protecting covering. Very young children are commonly wrapped up in matting, and thrown into some canal or river, or laid by the side of some tomb, or at the foot of the city-wall. Being unprotected, they are soon eaten up by the dogs and birds.

Sometimes persons desirous of performing meritorious deeds, build receptacles for the bodies or bones of infants. These are small structures of stone or brick, some eight or ten feet high, built without a door, but with a

small aperture through which the bodies may be thrown. It is a meritorious work to collect the bones of the unburied, and to put them into such a place of sepulture; but as these structures are not very numerous, many parents are not willing to trouble themselves so much as to carry the body of a child so far.

Yet there are cases in which some attention is paid to the wants of the spirits even of the young. It is not uncommon to see a procession passing through the streets, in which is borne a sedan-chair, decorated with the branches of the fir tree, and containing the tablet of some deceased person. It is a marriage procession. Instead of the bride, however, it is the spirit of the bride that occupies the marriage chair, and is thus born to the solemnization of the nuptials. Children betrothed by their parents have both died before the time for the marriage had arrived, and therefore their spirits must be united by the solemnization of the marriage ceremony here on earth. Nor is this ceremony observed only in case of a prior betrothal. Sometimes the parents of deceased children enter into a marriage contract in their behalf, and the nuptials are celebrated in due form.

When a family becomes extinct the spirits

of their dead are not neglected. There is so much fear on the part of the community lest they should bring evil upon them if their wants are not supplied, that all who have the means are glad to contribute something for their relief. The ancestral tablets of such families are collected together, sometimes in a temple built expressly for the purpose, and sometimes in a room hired from the priests in some Buddhist or Táuist temple. Persons are hired to provide the needful offerings at the proper times.

In the seventh month in each year, a public feast is provided for the benefit of all such wandering hungry ghosts as have no one to provide for them. The expenses are defrayed by a subscription among the shopkeepers in the street or neighborhood in which the ceremonies are performed. Buddhist priests are hired to officiate on the occasion, and a band of musicians is employed to second the prayers of the priests, and to attract and gratify the hungry ghosts.

A high staging, covered in with bamboo matting, is erected in some open space, or it may be directly over the street, extending from one side to the other, to the no small inconvenience of those who may wish to pass. On this staging tables are placed, covered with

savory dishes of pork, fowls, and vegetables, with a little tea and wine, and some fruits and flowers. Here the priests, in the midst of the noisy clangor of the musicians, go through their prayers and incantations, before the image of Yen-lo, the King of Hades. At the same time abundant supplies of money and clothing are provided for the destitute spirits. Large quantities of paper money and paper garments of all patterns, may be seen fluttering in the breeze, suspended from cords passed back and forth from one side of the street to the other. These are all gathered at the proper time, and transmitted to the spirits through the flames. When the spirits have had sufficient time to finish their meal, the rabble, who have been looking on, are allowed to help themselves to all that is left. They find it none the worse for having been appropriated by the ghosts ; but they are sometimes disappointed, for a vessel that seems to be full, heaped up and overflowing with delicious food, is found to be occupied beneath with earth or shavings. It is not wrong to cheat the poor spirits in this way, since they do not know the difference.

This ceremony takes place at night. Numerous lanterns, sometimes gaily painted and of curious construction, are seen hanging in

every direction. They not only serve as decorations to the feast, but assist the spirits in selecting such garments as they need. The brilliant display of lights, the long lines of gaily-colored garments, the solemn chant of the priests—the drums, gongs, and occasional bursts of shrill music—the motley groups of spectators, with the merry laugh and cheerful sports of a crowd of boys, must give to the occasion an attractive charm in the eyes of men wearied with labor and of boys released from books. The pleasant excitement connected with this and similar festivals, might of itself serve to perpetuate them, even if the people should no more believe in the reality of the benefits derived from them, than a Christian people believe in the reality of the fabled visits of the mirth-loving Santa Claus.

CHAPTER XXI.

SUPERSTITIOUS FEARS AT NINGPO IN 1846.

With the views they entertain of the power of disembodied spirits, and of their influence on the affairs of this world, the Chinese must necessarily have constantly before them the fear of ghosts and hobgoblins. This is always the case, but circumstances occasionally occur which give peculiar power to these painful fears. This was singularly exemplified at Ningpo in the summer of the year 1846.

During that summer, a long-continued drought threatened to destroy entirely the rice crop, and the people were not a little excited and alarmed in consequence. The usual measures were employed to induce the gods to send rain. Processions in honor of the Dragon were of almost daily occurrence. The slaughter of animals was, for many weeks, strictly prohibited, and the magistrates repaired every morning to one of the large temples to offer

up their prayers. Yet the rain did not come.

In the month of June, rumors were diligently circulated that a gang of desperadoes were engaged in putting out poisoned cakes in order to poison as many persons as they could. They would drop them in the streets, or slip them in among those in the bakers' shops. Placards were put up in conspicuous places, cautioning people to beware. It was stated that in a neighboring town many persons had died in this way, and that when their friends went to the graves to weep they found that the coffins had been opened, and that the eyes of the deceased had been cut out, and the brains abstracted, for the purpose, it was supposed, of making medicine.

After this it was reported that, on a certain night, all the fowls lost some of their principal feathers, and this remarkable fact was accounted for by supposing that they had been plucked by ghosts, who designed to use them for swords, to be employed in killing men and women.

These rumors gradually passed away, but the long continuance of the drought, and the real danger of a serious calamity, kept the public mind in an excitable state. About the first of August a fresh rumor, of a more

alarming character, was started. Placards were put up at the city gates and other public places, stating that some of the neighboring districts were beginning to be annoyed by the visits of evil spirits, and that they might soon be looked for at Ningpo. The people were exhorted to guard against such an intrusion by beating gongs, and by pasting charms over their doors. These suggestions were eagerly adopted, and soon there was a great demand for both gongs and charms. These charms were merely slips of yellow paper, on which were written four mysterious characters, the meaning of which no one pretended to understand.

Then a story was started, that some persons living near the east gate had been aroused from their sleep in the night by strange noises, as though a large body of men were marching through the street, with loud outcries. Yet on looking out, not a sign of a human being was to be seen. Similar noises were afterwards heard in the air, and many thought they were caused by the ghosts of the Chinese and English soldiers who had fallen during the war. They were fighting their battles over again. The expected inroad from the spiritual world, it was said, might be daily looked for.

These spiritual visitants were called Tsz'-ane—"Paper-men"—and were supposed to

be brought in by the use of magic arts. They are paper men converted by conjurors into real, though invisible men. In the "History of the Three States," a very popular historical novel, it is stated that on one occasion, during the progress of a battle, paper men and horses were transformed into real cavalry, and their power was broken only by the use of counter magic, and the pouring out of a mixture of the blood of swine, sheep, and dogs. Such were the visitors to be expected, and it might be presumed that their object could be no other than to bring upon the people calamities and death.

Singularly enough, just at this juncture, while all were expecting this terrible visitation, about four o'clock on the morning of the fourth of August, the whole population were suddenly aroused from their slumbers by a fearful commotion. Every one felt his bed shaking with great violence, and on jumping up, found the house itself rocking upon its foundations. At the same time, a mysterious and awful noise was heard rolling along like muttering thunder, some thought in the air, some thought under ground. The tiles, too, of the roof were heard rattling as if with the tread of many men. A universal cry of horror and dismay instantly arose from every

part of the city, and the cry was echoed from house to house. "The ghosts have come, the ghosts have come." And then could be heard the din of gongs booming through the still night air; for the silent gloom of the night, and the stillness of the atmosphere, served to increase the universal fright. The people seemed frantic with terror. Every article that could make a noise was called into requisition. Tables and chairs, pots and kettles, were lustily pounded, while those who could do nothing else were leaping up and down, throwing up their arms, clapping their hands, and screaming with all their might. This horrid din, mingled with the wild shrieks of a quarter of a million of people, might truly have been well nigh sufficient to convince the most unbelieving, that the Prince of Darkness had indeed appeared with his demon host.

Of all that vast population, perhaps not one thought of any other way of accounting for the disturbance than by attributing it to evil spirits. When it was suggested that it was an earthquake, the explanation was not accepted. One man, of respectable standing, and a literary graduate, offered an argument against such a supposition, which he evidently thought sufficient to settle the question. He said that if it had been an earthquake, it would

of course have been predicted, like an eclipse of the sun, in the Imperial Almanac! If the shock had been more severe, perhaps the people would have been more easily convinced that it was indeed an earthquake: but no houses were destroyed, and no lives were lost.

After a few days, as the news came in from other places, the conviction became pretty general that it was in fact an earthquake; but its effect, nevertheless, was to keep up, and greatly increase, the excitement about the ghosts. During the whole month of August the city was in an uproar, and the beating of gongs and drums was continued every evening. The most absurd reports were constantly circulated and believed. It was said that not only ghosts of men, but of lions and tigers were to appear, and that they would be far more formidable than the living animals themselves. Again, it was said that on a given night six persons, who were born in certain years, under certain astrological influences, would die if they slept. The consequence was, that all who might be included in the number spent that night without sleep.

It was very generally believed that the foreigners residing in the city were in some way connected with these ghostly visits, though

some thought it might be the work of Roman Catholics, and others of Buddhist priests. An English missionary lady was supposed to possess peculiar power as an enchantress; and the mothers of some of her pupils visited her school in great anxiety lest their daughters had been murdered or bewitched.

The writer was himself residing at that time within the city, and frequently walked with his family on the city wall. These evening walks were thought by some to be connected with their demoniacal enemies. The report was soon current in the city that he kept multitudes of these demons shut up in a bottle, and had been seen, while on the city wall, to draw the cork, and with a blast from his mouth, and a movement of his arms, to send the whole troop flying over the city to do their work of death.

The excited imaginations of the people extracted food for their fears from the commonest objects. A rag doll, knocked about by the children, or even a child's picture, was an object of terror.

This state of things continued until the month of September, when the rain fell. The excitement however had previously been partially allayed by a grand procession in honor of the God of War, Kwan-ti. The authorities

had at first issued proclamations against the beating of gongs, and other noises, but finding this ineffectual they changed their course, and aided the people in the use of means to get rid of the pest. They offered up prayers in the temples, and contributed largely to the procession of Kwan-ti.

Such facts as these present in a strong light the debasing power of heathenism. We, in our wisdom, being enlightened by the word of God, may laugh at such superstitious terrors. But we must remember that, to the deluded Chinese, these fears are realities. If the evils dreaded were imaginary, the suffering, the intense mental excitement, the depressing anxiety, were all as real, and affected their happiness as much, as if they had good grounds for their fears. They must ever continue exposed to these baseless terrors until the Bible brings them relief.

CHAPTER XXII.

NECROMANCY—THE ADOPTED DAUGHTER OF THE SEVEN SISTERS—TABLE-TURNING — SPIRITUAL WRITING.

Entertaining the views of the power and influence of disembodied spirits which have been described, the Chinese could not be expected to avoid the practice of necromancy. They are quite at home in the art, and are far in advance of the most expert among the table-turning, spirit-rapping, necromancers of our own Bible-enlightened republic. We shall see, too, that the forms which the demoniacal art has assumed in this country, were long ago anticipated by our less enlightened and much despised brethren, on the other side of the world.

A common mode of practising the art is that in which the spirit takes possession of the body of the necromancer—or to speak in the modern style—the medium—and utters through

his or her organs, the desired response. In this case the performer is wrought upon by incantations, until thrown into a kind of frenzy, or into something like the mesmeric sleep, and while thus in a state of insensibility, his utterances are regarded as infallible. The inquiry may relate to the issue of a disease, or the means by which it may be healed. Perhaps the inquirer wishes to know where certain lost or stolen property is to be found; or it may be, seeks some general information as to his future prospects, or as to the best means of speedily making his fortune. In other cases it is desired to obtain some information as to the condition, or wishes, of a deceased relative.

The following narrative will serve to give an idea of the Chinese view of the powers of a sorceress. It is abridged from a narrative drawn up by a missionary at Canton, but in its details it is thoroughly Chinese, and the circumstances might have occurred, with perhaps slight modifications, in any part of the empire. The facts were given by a Chinese gentleman, who witnessed the exhibition in the house of his sister.

The sorceress, or "medium," called herself the adopted daughter of the seven genii sisters. The incantation began by placing seven in-

cense-sticks on the outer sill of the window. The medium then lay down upon a couch, and muttered something in a low tone for some ten minutes, and thus sank away into a trance. Her limbs were rigid but trembling violently; her body cold and pale. While in this state she gave forth the mysterious utterances in a low and plaintive tone.

Her spirit having now gone up to the mansion of the seven sisters, was heard in conversation with them. The sisters were all abroad in the earth attending to their duties, except the fifth, who was delighted to see her daughter, and called a servant to boil some tea. They afterwards took dinner together.

The spectators here on earth, being now aware of the presence of the sister in the body of the sorceress, invited her into the garden. She replied—"I do not like to go into gardens: it is my place to superintend family residences, and tombs on the hills, and nothing else." She was then requested to make an examination of the house. "Towards what quarter does your house front?" she inquired. "It looks towards the north," the lady replied. So the sister entered it, but stopped at the door and remarked—"The lintel of this door is not level." Having come in, she said, "The well is properly located, and so is the seat of the

god of it." She examined the seats of the "guardians of the door," and said they were all right; but expressed regret that the "lord of the earth" was placed so much in the dark. She thought it very desirable to let him have more light. Then she looked at the places of the principal gods, and at the ancestral tablets, and said they were "unusually well situated." She then turned and went into the kitchen. Here she remarked, "The seat of the god of the fireplace is an uneasy one; you had better change it, and make it front towards the west."

Finally the sister went to the chamber, and behold there sat the ghost of an old aunt. She had been dead nearly ninety years; and, through the lips of the sorceress, uttered a long discourse, bewailing her mother's negligence in not having provided her with a husband. She complained that she was lonely and desolate; and that her clothes were old and ragged. When she at length announced her intention to go home, her niece inquired, "Where does my aunt reside?" The ghost replied—"The place where I stay is under your bed." "But," said the niece, in alarm, "May I not request you to go to the altar of the gods, and take a place there?" The old lady replied, "Niece, you have never treated

me with proper regard, and therefore I stay under your bed to do you injury unawares. But after three years I will undergo another metamorphosis, and have another body, and then your family will be in no more danger."

When the sorceress awoke from her trance, she declared she knew nothing of what she had been saying. Those who witnessed the proceeding were perfectly satisfied that the whole was a reality. Henceforth the ghost of the old aunt becomes a source of constant and terrible anxiety and alarm. The necessary consultations with the sorceress and her coadjutors, as to the best means of remedying the evils thus made known, become a means of no small pecuniary profit to them; and the changes in the position and construction of different parts of the house involve the family in heavy expenses. Such a hallucination cannot but be a cause of intense mental suffering; yet very few are the Chinese families who are not, sometimes in a greater, sometimes in a less degree, under the influence of these horrible apprehensions. This should be no matter of surprise when we consider the numbers who, in the midst of the light of revelation, are the dupes of a similar credulity. A Christian people should not mock at their fears, but rather pity them, and give them that light be-

fore which the darkness of superstition shall flee away.

Not only the spirits of men, but even the ghosts of animals sometimes impart information through these conjurers. In 1852, a Táuist priest at Shanghae professed to be in communication with the ghost of an old fox, which lived several thousand years ago. The fox had become a young lady, and would converse, through the priest, with persons who wished to know the best means of promoting their worldly interests. He was probably a ventriloquist; but after gulling some of his dupes out of considerable sums of money, his imposture was discovered; and the consequence was that a severe personal castigation was inflicted upon him.

Table-turning and spiritual manifestations are not unknown in China. In this, as in many other things, they are in advance of the practitioners among ourselves. The mode of carrying on this operation is somewhat different from that in vogue in the United States. The table is turned upside down, upon a pair of chopsticks, laid at right angles over the mouth of a mortar, or bowl, filled with water. Four persons lay one hand upon each leg of the table, while the other clasps the free hand of one of the four, and thus the circle is com-

pleted. An incantation is now chanted by the "medium," and soon the table begins to move. The "circle" move with it, and in a minute it is whirling violently upon its axis, until it is thrown violently off its balance, and falls upon the floor. The motion of the table is universally attributed to supernatural agency, but it seems not to have been used as a means of communication with the spiritual world.

There is no necessity for resorting to so clumsy a method of communication with the dead. The spirits have been induced to write their communications. A table is sprinkled with some kind of powder, or flour, or bran, or dust: then a small basket, without a handle, is armed with a pencil or chopstick, which is tied to its edge, or thrust through its interstices. The basket is then turned upside down, its edges resting upon the tips of one or two fingers of two persons standing on opposite sides of the table; and in such a manner that the pencil touches the powdered surface. In a short time the pencil moves, leading after it the basket and the fingers on which it rests, and tracing upon the dusty table lines and figures in which a good linguist easily recognizes the characters of the Chinese language. In this way information is communicated on

subjects of which the operators have no knowledge. Sometimes indeed a ghost thus invoked may be unable to write Chinese, or may be unwilling to exercise its powers; and then nothing can be discovered but unmeaning lines and angles. But in general the composition is good, and the information valuable.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ASTROLOGY—USE OF HOROSCOPES—LUCKY AND UNLUCKY DAYS.

Besides the evils to be apprehended from evil spirits, various other influences are operating by which the destinies of men are affected. The air, the earth, the water, the heavens, are all exerting mysterious influences, for good and for evil, which are to be attracted or repelled. It is not strange that the heathen should, in all ages, have attributed so much power to those mysterious objects which shine so brightly and beautifully in the heavens, and perform the round of their to them incomprehensible movements with such wonderful regularity and precision. Knowing nothing of the nature of the stars, it is not strange that they have so generally been led, by the suggestions of their superstitious views of nature, to invest them with the powers of deities, and look upon them as exercising in-

fluences over the affairs of men corresponding with their apparent magnitude and brilliancy.

Many of the stars are worshiped, both singly and collectively, as gods. Temples are erected to the "Seven Precious Ones," or the seven principal stars of the constellation of the Great Bear. The God of Literature, to whom the aspirants for literary fame pray for success, resides in the stars of the same constellation.

The Dipper, called Peh-teu, the "Northern Peck," is an object of the highest veneration. The star Benetnasch is a peculiarly powerful and fortunate star. The official residence of magistrates are placed under its protection. In front of every such official residence is a high detached wall, placed so as to cover the great front gate leading to the principal court of the building; and on this wall is a huge figure, rudely painted, intended apparently to represent a lion, though very unlike anything in nature. This is, however, the embodiment of the powerful star-god who protects the place.

The peculiar concatenation of causes and effects by which the stars are connected with earthly affairs, is in the highest degree complicated and abstruse. The wily astrologist

has ample room to bring out any result which may best suit his own purposes, without running any risk of falling into a mistake which could endanger his reputation.

The five planets, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn, are designated respectively the water, metal, fire, wood, and earth stars. These rule over the year and its four seasons, controlling the operations of nature. They are denoted by black, white, red, green, and yellow. They stand in relation respectively to the tastes, salt, pungent, bitter, sour, and sweet, and also to the north, west, south, east, and centre. Then they have also their peculiar connections with the "twelve branches," and the "ten stems," which are characters used in marking the years of the cycle of sixty years, and with the twelve months of the year, and the twelve hours of the day. The twelve branches are again denoted by twelve animals—the rat, cow, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, sheep, monkey, cock, dog, and boar. The planets are further connected with the twelve signs of the zodiac, and with the twenty-eight constellations. Then each day of the year is designated by the name of one of the twenty-eight constellations in uninterrupted succession.

In this combination of the planets, stars,

elements, animals, colors, tastes and points of the compass, we have a system of influences which control the destinies of men, and regulate mundane affairs. The results of these combined influences may be calculated, and often foretold. Knowing the year, month, day and hour of a man's birth, we know the star which controls his destiny, and the modifications imposed on the influences of that star by the other influences in operation at the same time.

A record of these particulars is often made in a book kept for the purpose in some of the temples. When the record is made a fee is paid to the priest in charge, and a receipt taken certifying the entry. This record is looked upon as equivalent to a constant prayer for long life and prosperity, and it is of the utmost importance, too, as a guide to the diviners, who are consulted in reference to every important undertaking. In sickness a knowledge of these circumstances is of importance, as indicative of the result, or of the mode of treatment. If a matrimonial alliance is contemplated, the first step to be taken is to compare the horoscopes of the parties to be united. If the practitioner of the mysterious art decides that they are under the control of antagonistic influences, which would produce an

unfortunate union, the affair is stopped at once. The decision is final.

When one dies the diviner must again be consulted, for the influences which prevailed at his birth, and their combination with those which were in the ascendant at the hour of his death, are the basis on which depends the proper selection of a burial-place.

Since times and seasons are controlled by stars, which, in turn, have their influences variously modified by concurrent or opposing influences, each year, month, day, and hour, has its peculiar character, derived from the combined result of these various influences. In one year all central places will be lucky, in another year, the reverse. Now the benign influences from above are shed upon the north quarter, now upon the south.

So also each day has its own special characteristic. One day is fraught with happy influences for all mankind. Another is loaded with evil, and only evil, for all. One day is fortunate for one man, but sheds a curse upon another: or, it gives success to one class of undertakings, but is sure to surround another class with inscrutable difficulties and dangers.

It is one of the important duties of the Astronomical Board, at the capital, to ascertain

beforehand the peculiar character of each day, and to note it in the Imperial Almanac, for the information of the people. Thus every act of life, of the least importance, is dependent upon these ever-varying influences; and all must consult the Almanac, if not the soothsayer, before entering upon any important undertaking. By these vain and foolish restraints upon their freedom of action, the spirit of enterprise is repressed, business is hampered and retarded, and the whole machinery of social life is clogged. Until a lucky day is found no journey must be commenced, no vessel set sail, no family change its dwelling, no foundation for a building be laid, no new enterprise be commenced, no burial take place, no marriage be solemnized.

The whole Chinese people are under the deepest bondage to these superstitious notions. One of the cheering indications connected with the revolution, which has been so long in progress, is the fact, that the leaders have thrown away all these fables as idle trash. They proclaim their conviction that all days are alike, and equally good for every undertaking, provided only that the Sabbath be not desecrated.

CHAPTER XXIV.

GEOMANCY—SELECTION OF SITES FOR BURIAL—CONSTRUCTION OF DWELLINGS.

Closely connected with the ideas of the Chinese as to the power of the stars, are their notions with reference to the influences connected with particular localities on earth. These notions afford employment to a numerous class of men, whose business it is to determine the character of the influences resulting from the particular assemblage of circumstances and features found in any given locality. It is, of course, a great object with this large and influential class to cherish the belief in the reality of these mysterious influences, and in their ability to detect and accurately predetermine the effect of every particular feature, connected with any place concerning which they may be consulted.

The professors of the art of geomancy are considered of great importance to the commu-

nity. They are indeed, in general estimation, quite as essential to the well-being and prosperity of the public as are the professors of the healing art; and some of them have acquired a high degree of consideration, from their suposed skill in unravelling the multitudinous combinations by which they read the decisions of fate. These combinations are so various, that there is abundant scope for the exercise of the powers of the imagination. The man who can make the greatest display of striking and far-fetched connections in making out his cabalistic formulas, will earn the highest reputation.

The occasions on which the skill of the geomancer is most frequently called into requisition are those connected with the burial of the dead. It is of the utmost importance that a fortunate site should be procured for the tomb, and the rich spare no expense to procure such a one for their dead. The poor are satisfied if they can find one that is free from influences that would be positively injurious, and often have to neglect such considerations entirely, and content themselves with such a site as their poverty may be able to command.

The site of the tomb is supposed to influence the condition both of the departed spirit, and

of the surviving members of his family. Hence the anxiety of the family to secure the best possible site when the head of it dies. The geomancers sometimes have great difficulty in finding a spot free from all objections; and this is generally the case when the family is known to be wealthy. The geomancers are in no haste to bring their researches to a conclusion, while there is hope of putting money into their own purses by delay. A case occurred at Canton, in which the body of a wealthy merchant was kept unburied no less than twenty years, because no suitable site for the tomb could be found.

The Chinese mode of burial admits of this kind of imposition. In point of fact, the corpse is buried when it is laid in its coffin. The coffin is made of very thick, heavy timber, and the joints are all carefully closed by pasting layers of paper over them, so as to make them perfectly air-tight. For greater security a little lime is generally put in with the corpse. In this way it is possible to keep the coffined corpse in the house for years, without any unpleasant consequences. The practice indeed is not uncommon. Some have not the means at command for burying in such style as they would wish. They must wait for better days. Some do not find a place to suit them. Thus it

sometimes happens that on entering a Chinese gentleman's house, a coffin is one of the most prominent objects seen among the articles of furniture.

The places which are calculated to advance the fortunes of their possessors are few. Some such exist near Ningpo. Several of them were discovered nearly three hundred years ago, by a Buddhist priest who excelled in the art. The families who obtained these sites have enjoyed, it is said, uninterrupted prosperity ever since. Among their descendants, some have always been found in the highest offices of the state.

At a place in Nganhwui there is an ancient temple, erected with a view to prevent its site being occupied as a burial-place. A print of a dragon's foot was discovered in the soil, and the geomancers declared that such a site would be so fortunate, that the family who should possess it for a burial-place, would attain to the imperial dignity. The owner of the ground therefore determined to occupy it for himself, that his posterity might enjoy the good fortune connected with it. The people of the district were alarmed. They saw civil war, bloodshed, commotions, and dire calamities in such a use of the spot; for these are the usual concomitants of a change of dynasty, without

which the prediction of the geomancers could not be fulfilled. A subscription was taken up for the purpose of purchasing the ground, and erecting a temple on the lucky spot. The Emperor heard the rumor, and contributed largely to an object so important as the preservation of his throne. The Emperor and the beggar, the learned and the illiterate, are all alike the slaves of superstition.

It is not only the position of tombs that must be fixed with reference to the geomantic indications of the place. The dwellings of the living, as well as the abodes of the dead, should be constructed with a view to secure happy influences. If there be no choice as to the site of a proposed building, there always is as to its position and as to the location of doorways and passages. Care must be taken to avoid having a neighbor's ridge-pole pointing directly towards the front entrance. In arranging the doorways, it is important that no two doors should be exactly opposite to each other, lest the mysterious evil influences, or wandering ghosts, should too easily find their way into the inner apartments.

In the erection of a house, the following six points are of great importance: the position and direction of the roof-ridge, the position of the cooking range and cupboard, the direc-

tion in which the doors shall open; the position of the well, if there be one; the place for the mortar used in preparing certain articles of food; the position of the bedsteads.

These important matters require a special investigation by a professor of the art; though the poor, or those who grudge the money necessary to pay the regular practitioner, may be content to leave the decision to chance; or may decide according to their own notions of what is best.

While a house is in process of erection, precautions are taken to avoid inclosing any unlucky influence. After the frame is raised, and before it is roofed in, several lanterns, attached to shoots of bamboo, are elevated on a pole above the ridge of the roof; and are allowed to remain there for several days, candles being burnt in them at night. This precaution is seldom dispensed with, as the omission might bring misfortune not only upon the owner and occupants of the house, but also upon the builder.

CHAPTER XXV.

CHARMS AND AMULETS—EXORCISING AT AMOY—PROTECTION OF HOUSES—TOWERS—PORCELAIN TOWER AT NANKING—EFFECTS OF HIGH BUILDINGS—CHURCHES AT NINGPO AND SHANGHAE.

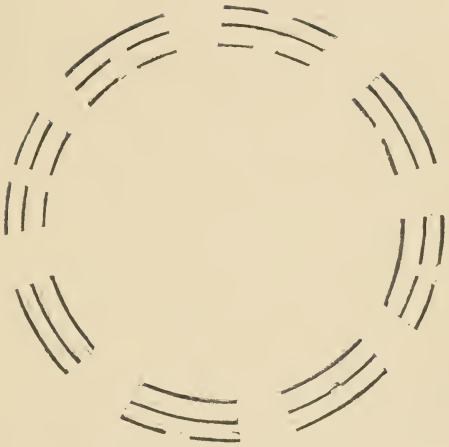
Against evil influences of whatever kind, whether proceeding from above or from beneath, remedies are provided. They are to be counteracted by invoking the aid of opposing influences. Charms and amulets of various kinds are employed. Some of these are used for the ejection of evils already present; some for the prevention of those that are feared. In case of sickness, spells, consisting of mystical characters written on paper, are burnt, and the patient drinks the ashes in tea. The same remedy has been used to cure the stubborn disease of hunger, where more substantial food could not be procured. At Canton, during the distress occasioned by the attacks of the rebels upon that city in 1854, when provisions of all kinds were very dear, many of the poor

resorted to this means of quelling the demands of their appetites. The demon, in all probability, would not consent to be exorcised by so unsubstantial a power.

Amulets are generally worn about the persons of young children. Copper coins, or large brass disks, having the eight diagrams,* or other characters upon the face, are often used. Red cloth, worn upon the person, is supposed to be efficacious in driving away evil spirits.

At Amoy, a singular method is employed to abstract all noxious influences from the body. It is employed particularly on the fifth day of the fifth month, but is not limited to any particular time. When this plan is resorted to, every member of the family to whom it is to be applied is provided with a human figure made of paper, corresponding in appearance with the age and sex of the individual to whom it is to be applied. When all is ready the operator takes the figure, and rubs its face several times down the breast of the person to be exorcised. It is then applied to the back in the same manner, the application being, in both cases, to the exterior of the garments. The subject of the operation then kisses the figure, after which it is carefully folded in

* Pah-kwâ.



The Eight Diagrams, or Pah-Kwâ.

yellow paper, with scolloped edges, carried to the open air, and burnt in front of the door.

The same operation is performed upon the other members of the household, and thus their bodies are freed for the time from those pernicious influences which may have lain concealed within them. Those influences, whatever they may be, pass into the paper image, and expend their powers upon it.

In addition to this precaution, some families purchase a paper figure of a white tiger, an imaginary animal whose power they fear. A piece of meat, raw or cooked, is attached with a needle to the tongue of the effigy, and the whole is burnt. In this way the demands of the animal's appetite are satisfied, and he is content to go on his way without doing any harm.

One of the most commonly used charms is the figure of the Pah-kwâ—the eight diagrams—arranged in a circular form. These diagrams and their powers are discussed in the Yih-king—the Book of Changes—a work composed by Wan-Wang, the literary king, about B. C. 1150. They are triplets of lines, whole and broken, the various combinations of which produce eight sets of triplets, each having its peculiar properties. These, by further combination, produce sixty-four figures,

which also possess their several peculiar powers. The first set are representative respectively of heaven, vapor, fire, thunder, wind, water, mountains, earth.

These mysterious figures embody, in some inscrutable manner, the elements of all change, the destinies of all ages, the first principles of all morals, the foundation of all actions. They of course furnish important elements for the subtle calculations of the diviner. From such a system of calculation, the results obtained must depend wholly on the ingenuity and imagination of the practitioner.

The figure of the eight diagrams is seen everywhere. It is often worn upon the person. It is seen, too, pasted in conspicuous positions about houses, chiefly over the door, to prevent the ingress of evil influences.

Various other devices are in vogue for the protection of houses. Sometimes the figure of a military chieftain is placed upon the roof, and again, a hideous looking tiger head. One writes upon his door the word *Teu*—The Peck—intimating that the place is under the protection of the stars forming the Dipper, in the Constellation of the Great Bear. Another puts his trust in a rude drawing of some ferocious animal; or an announcement, placed in a conspicuous position, that the sacred phœnix

is within. On almost every door the character Fuh—happiness—stares you in the face, not as an indication of its actual presence, but of the desires of the inmates.

At the heads of streets, or other similar positions, stone tablets are sometimes erected, having engraved on the face the words "How dare you"—equivalent to "I defy you." This defiance is intended as a menace which will deter any further advance of noxious influences approaching the place, and thus protect the neighborhood on one side from the effects of any of those mysterious powers which may be in operation on the other side.

These influences are variously affected by different objects. Elevated objects possess great efficacy in collecting and spreading them, whether for good or for evil. They are therefore employed for warding off such influences as tend to injury. High towers of five, or seven, or nine stories have been erected for the express purpose of protection against noxious influences. Every district must be provided with one or more such towers, or pagodas. Some of these are of Buddhistic origin, and are specially consecrated to Buddha: but many have been built at great expense, for no other object than the advantage of the Fung-shui—"wind and water"—the expression in

use to designate all these kinds of influences. There is one of these towers within the walls of the city of Ningpo.

The celebrated porcelain tower at Nanking, is a Buddhist pagoda. It stands just outside the city walls, but the inclosure in which it stands is surrounded by a high wall of its own. It was built by Yungloh, the third Emperor of the Ming dynasty, about A. D. 1413. It is nine stories high. It is said to be two hundred and sixty feet in height, and three hundred feet in circumference at the base. It is not, strictly speaking, a porcelain tower, but its external face is of brick, beautifully glazed, and of various colors. The most prominent color is green, with which are mingled red, yellow, and white. The inner surface of the wall is faced with black tiles, on each of which is a gilt image of Buddha in relief; so that each story glitters with over two hundred images of this god. The whole of the woodwork of this famous tower was burnt by the insurgents, after they obtained possession of Nanking; and the large Buddhist temple at its base was also destroyed. More recently, in the latter part of the year 1856, the whole structure was destroyed by being blown up with gunpowder. Such, at least, is the report from Nanking.

Besides these towers, other elevations are employed for a similar purpose. According to the geomancers, every city should have its hill, its hillock, and its level field; and where they do not exist in nature, artificial ones must be constructed. The artificial "hills" are, of course, on a small scale, but the rule of the geomancer is observed.

Artificial mounds are often constructed to keep down the unlucky influences supposed to prevail in particular localities. Near a vacant piece of ground in Ningpo, set apart as a parade ground for military exercises, stands a high bell-tower connected with a neighboring temple. From the bell-tower unlucky influences are shed upon the parade-ground. So, in order to obviate the danger from this source, a high mound of earth and rock-work has been thrown up, at great expense, on the opposite side of the ground.

Again, in the same city, an important street is supposed by the people to bear some resemblance in form to a centiped. It requires a vivid imagination to discover in what the resemblance consists, but as such is the popular fancy, means must be devised for expelling the noxious influences of that poisonous insect. At the head of this street stands the residence of the Tau-tai, the highest civil officer residing

in the city. He is protected by a hillock thrown up in front of his gate. The citizens, moreover, are forbidden to erect any building of more than one story in the immediate vicinity of his grounds.

The street itself must also be protected, and this has been accomplished by throwing an arch of solid masonry over the street, and erecting upon it a small temple, which is thus elevated above all the surrounding objects. Upon the summit of this building the figure of a cock was placed. As fowls are in the habit of eating centipeds, it was thought this device would be an effectual protection. In the year 1850, a large Presbyterian church was built at no great distance from this street. It was an object of fear to the neighbors on account of its height. On all neighboring dwellings fierce-looking tiger heads might be seen scowling defiance at the evil influences shed abroad by this high building. Great was the dismay when it was found that the tower of the church was higher, though by a very few feet, than the elevated building by which the street was protected. It so happened that after the lapse of some two years a fire broke out, and destroyed a large amount of property in the centiped street; and among other buildings, that which was supposed to protect

the street. This result was attributed to the effect of the high church tower which overlooked it, and therefore overpowered the benign influences of their own erection, in which they had trusted. This building was immediately replaced by another similar one; but care was now taken to have it somewhat higher than the unlucky church tower; and instead of the cock, it was surmounted by the figure of a more powerful animal—a catamount.

Some time afterwards the Papists commenced a large cathedral in another part of the city, which was to be of a great height. But when the walls had been carried up nearly to the contemplated height, they one night fell suddenly to the ground. This result was supposed to demonstrate the efficacy of their catamount as a protecting power, for it was by its superiority that the Papal walls were brought to the ground.

High buildings generally—such as are higher than those of their neighbors—are objects of fear, and therefore, such are not often built. Indeed the ordinary method of building Chinese dwellings compels their restriction to two stories. A church tower, of course, overtops them all. The large Baptist church at Shanghae created no little alarm in the

neighborhood, when its tower began to rise over the tops of all surrounding structures. The district magistrate for the district in which the city is situated, died soon after the church was built, and his death was universally attributed to the influence of the building.

The color of this church, and that of the Episcopal church, also excited serious apprehensions. The walls had been made of a red color, which being the color of fire, the effects might be expected to be very disastrous. The Tau-tai addressed the American Consul on the subject, earnestly desiring him to issue orders that the color should be changed. If not, he said, many serious fires would, no doubt, be the consequence.

This same magistrate, on another occasion, was applied to to affix his seal to the title-deed of a lot which had been purchased by the Presbyterian Mission, as a site for a church. His honor objected to the erection of a high building in that situation; and refused to affix his seal to the deed, or ratify the sale. He assigned singular reasons for his course.

In a communication to the American Consul on the subject, he uses the following language: "The gentry of Shanghae generally, and the diviners, having accurately examined the spot, find that the temple of the god of

fire lies towards the south, and fronts towards the north, which correspond with the diagrams *Ki* and *Tsae*, representing water and fire. It is on this account that the whole region enjoys peace and prosperity. The lot now rented is near this temple, and to the west of it. Now the west is the quarter represented by the diagram *Tae*, whose nature is connected with metal, which can be subdued by fire. If then a high 'worship hall' be erected there, metal and fire will come into collision, and the people of the whole city fear there will be many fires in consequence. Moreover, if there be any elevated object in the quarter connected with metal, diseases and calamities will result."

This language is employed by an intelligent officer of high rank. He was a man, too, of more than ordinary intelligence, for he had long been in habits of intercourse with foreigners, as an extensive merchant, and spoke the English language fluently. These ideas are received among the most intelligent men with as little doubt, apparently, as is entertained among educated men in Europe and America, of the revolution of the earth around the sun.

Such are some of the superstitions by which Satan maintains his hold upon the minds of

this people. The wily deceivers who pretend to assist them in their difficulties, do them a far greater injury than merely rob them of their money. Their fears are often excited by an evil omen, or an unfavorable response, and they endure all the suffering occasioned by the anticipation of evil—often worse than to encounter the evil itself. On the other hand, hopes are excited which lead to disappointment, giving rise to discontent. The constant dread of evil spirits ever present, and ever watching for an opportunity to inflict an injury; anxious to mar every project, and foil them in every undertaking, occasions anxieties greater than those which flow from the realities which obstruct them in the execution of their plans. The remedy for all these imaginary evils is the knowledge of that all-controlling Power, to whom the whole realm of nature is subject; to whose sway all existences must yield, and who is ever ready to protect and succor those who put their trust in Him.

JEWS IN CHINA—MOHAMMEDANS IN CHINA.

It will be proper here to give some account of the Jews and Mohammedans in China. Early in the 17th century, Matthew Ricci, and the other Jesuit missionaries residing at Peking, were suddenly made aware of the fact, that there existed a Jewish community in the city of K'ae-fungfu, the capital of the province of Honan. This information was first communicated by a member of that community, who happened to be residing at the time at the capital. This information was subsequently confirmed by further investigations, and by personal visits of some of the Jesuit missionaries.

In the year 1704, Father Gozani visited K'ae-fungfu, and gave a full account of the Jewish colony, but from that time to the close of the year 1850, nothing was known of their condition. It was known, however, through intelligent Chinese, that the colony continued to exist, being designated by the Chinese, "The sect which plucks out the sinew."

In the month of November, 1850, two intelligent natives, under the general supervision of the Rev. Dr. Medhurst, were dispatched to K'ae-fungfu, with a view to obtain some definite knowledge of the condition of the colony. The expenses of the journey were borne from funds contributed for the object in England, and placed at the disposal of the Bishop of Victoria. The native messengers set out on the 15th of November, and arrived at their destination on the 9th of December, having travelled a distance of about seven hundred miles. They found the colony greatly reduced in number and in position. Once they had numbered seventy clans: now but seven, numbering together about two hundred individuals. They were sunk in the deepest poverty, and subjected to contempt and persecution from their neighbors, many of whom were Mohammedans. Their religion seemed to be little more than a name, but they retained their peculiarities to an extent sufficient to make a marked distinction between them and the heathen around them. Not an individual among them could read the Hebrew character, although they had a number of Hebrew manuscripts, which were carefully preserved in their synagogue. The last of their rabbis had died fifty years before, leaving no

one behind him who had any knowledge of Hebrew, and it was therefore impossible for them to recover it. The rite of circumcision had ceased to be observed, and even the expectation of a Messiah was no longer cherished. Their synagogue itself was fast going to ruin. A few manuscripts were procured and taken back to Shanghae, but they were not of much importance.

In the summer of 1851, the native messengers were again sent to K'ae-fungfu. On this occasion they succeeded in purchasing a number of manuscripts, and two respectable members of the congregation returned with them to Shanghae. Of the manuscripts obtained, six were rolls containing portions of the Pentateuch, and fifty-seven were smaller manuscripts, of which thirty-three contained each, one of the fifty-three sections of the law. Some of these manuscripts were much damaged by water, probably at the time of the flood, which occurred at K'ae-fungfu in the year 1642.

Of the early history of this colony of Jews we are as yet entirely ignorant. They themselves can give no account of their origin. From present appearances it seems probable that, unless they receive assistance and encouragement from without, this little congre-

gation of the children of Abraham will, ere long, become extinct.

Mohammedans are found in all parts of China, but their number is nowhere large. There is a mosque at Canton, but in the southern provinces generally, the number of Mohammedans is very small. At Amoy a few families reside, and there is a mosque at Chang-chau, and one at Fuh-chau. At Ningpo there are some twenty or thirty families. They have a mosque, but do not seem to be very zealous in the observance of rites of worship of any kind. Their Sabbath falls on Thursday, but it is not distinguished from other days except by a religious service at the mosque, which seems to be very little attended. The hall for worship is used for storing agricultural implements, and the dusty furniture would seem to indicate great neglect of religious worship.

At Hang-chaufu there are several mosques, and this is said to be one of the strongholds of the Mohammedan faith in China. There is no reason to believe, however, that any serious efforts are made to increase the number of their adherents by proselyting the heathen. Those who adhere to the false Prophet, do so because their fathers did so before them, and they do not wish to abandon the religion in

which they were born. Some of the members of the community have attained rank as officers of the imperial government, and in all probability, do not scruple to perform the idolatrous ceremonies prescribed to official personages.

CHAPTER XXVI.

PROTESTANT MISSIONS IN CHINA.

"The people which sat in darkness saw great light, and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up." The language of the prophet which once found its fulfillment "by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the Gentiles," has again begun to be fulfilled in the "land of Sinim."

Having looked at the "darkness" which has so long brooded over the land, it is proper to glance at the "light" which is now "springing up." All that can now be done is to state, very briefly, some of the results which have attended the labors of Protestant missionaries of the various evangelical denominations who have occupied this important field.

The labors of Protestant missionaries in China commenced in the year 1807, when
2. Robert Morrison reached Canton, and there, in the midst of discouragements and difficul-

ties, entered upon that course of study in which he was so signally successful. He had to encounter much opposition from his own countrymen, as well as from the Chinese. He could not perform much direct missionary labor, but was obliged to confine himself to such efforts as he could make in his private intercourse with the few Chinese with whom he became acquainted, or with his own domestics. His labors were confined principally to his study, but they were labors of the utmost importance, and have contributed not a little to the usefulness of those who have since entered into his labors.

In November, 1819, he completed a translation of the Bible; and in 1823, a Chinese and English dictionary, which was published at the expense of the East India Company. This dictionary has been, and still is, a most important aid to all who are engaged in the study of this most difficult language.

In 1813, Morrison was joined by William Milne, but his career, though very useful, was a short one. He died in 1822. In 1829 the American churches first entered this field, by sending to Canton the Rev. E. C. Bridgeman and the Rev. David Abeel.

It was not until the year 1842, when the treaty of Nanking opened five Chinese cities

to foreign commerce, that the missionary work in China can be said to have commenced. Previous to that time the few missionaries who had been residing within the limits of the empire, were subject to so many restrictions, that their labors were necessarily chiefly of a preparatory character. A number of missionaries, however, had been for some years laboring among the emigrant Chinese in the countries and islands about the Straits of Sunda, and as soon as China was thrown open, they were prepared to enter it with the advantage of a previous acquaintance with the language, and with the character of the people.

Since that period the number of missionaries in China has steadily increased. In the year 1855, the number of Protestant missionaries was one hundred and one. A majority of these were from the United States. Seven of them were from Germany, and the rest from England. There have been some changes since, but the number, it is believed, has not increased; the removals and deaths being about equal to the additions sent out. The whole number of Protestant missionaries sent to the Chinese, up to 1855, was one hundred and ninety. They have labored under the patronage of twenty-one missionary societies.

The difficulties to be overcome in carrying on the missionary work in China, are very great. One of the most serious lies in the nature of the language. The nature of the obstacle which the language presents to the success of the work may be understood, when it is remembered, that there are two languages to be acquired, and that each of these is more difficult of acquisition than any other language on earth. The written language is not a mere representation on paper of the sounds of the spoken language, but is entirely distinct from it.

The difficulty in acquiring the written language arises from the necessity of learning an immense number of arbitrary characters. Each word is represented by its own peculiar emblem, which must be impressed upon the memory. The number of characters, therefore, is equal to the number of words in the language, and in order to read books on ordinary topics with facility, not less than four thousand characters should be perfectly at command. He who would lay claim to scholarship, however, should be acquainted with eight or ten thousand. Morrison, in the second part of his dictionary, has defined twelve thousand six hundred and seventy-four characters; but the native work on which it is founded con-

tains about forty thousand. This includes, however, many that are obsolete.

The labor of committing to memory even three or four thousand such characters is, of course, very great. They are not composed of parts which, by combination, furnish a guide to the name or the meaning. The *sound* must be learned from the living teacher, for nothing in the character itself fixes its pronunciation. Then the form and the meanings of each have to be separately learned. The difficulty is further increased by the fact, that many different characters are pronounced in the same way, with only a slight variation of tone, and many with no variation at all.

The difficulty of acquiring the written language interferes with the missionary work, not only by increasing the labor of the missionary. This were a small matter. An effect of far greater moment is, the amount of labor with which the natives themselves must acquire it. It may be safely said, that Chinese youths must give much more time and labor to the study of their written language, if they would master it, than is required of American youths in mastering the Latin or Greek. The Chinese boy must give years to the mere acquisition of the *sound* of the characters; and then must labor long to impress their forms

upon his memory so as to be able to write them. The former he does by committing to memory whole volumes of the works of ancient authors, without understanding anything of the meaning; and the latter task he can only accomplish by writing and rewriting the characters, until they are indelibly impressed on the memory. All this labor is accomplished for the Latin and Greek when the alphabet has been mastered.

Many Chinese leave off where the student of Latin or Greek begins, and never get further than the sounds of some of the characters. By the time this labor is accomplished, the time their parents can afford to keep them at school is exhausted. If able to continue at school a few years longer, there is still no time for the study of anything but the language; and those useful branches of education considered so important in the schools of the United States and Europe, must ever be in a great measure excluded from Chinese schools, where the object is to thoroughly master their own language.

This difficulty of learning their written language must, of necessity, put it out of the power of the great mass of the people ever to become readers. The Bible therefore can never be made accessible to the common peo-

ple, unless some change is brought about which will diminish the labor of learning to read. This can only be effected by reducing the spoken languages to writing, by means of an alphabetical system. Then the language read will be the same as the language spoken, and a Chinese may learn to read without the necessity of learning a new language. When he shall have learned to pronounce the written sounds, the meaning will already be known to him, without further labor. Some efforts have been made in this direction by missionaries at several of the stations, but it is an innovation which the Chinese will be slow to adopt.

The advantages of the present written language are so great, and it is so much admired by the influential classes, that it is not likely to be abandoned. As a means of educating the masses, and enabling them to read the Bible, it will perhaps be given up, but as a means of communication understood throughout the empire, it is invaluable. The spoken languages even if written could be understood by but a limited number of people. The characters of the written language, though pronounced differently in different places, bear the same signification in all parts of the empire. This is analogous to the Arabic numer-

als, which are pronounced differently by the different nations of Europe, but are understood in the same sense by all.

The difficulty of acquiring the spoken language arises chiefly from the peculiar tones with which it is necessary to become familiar. Each word has a tone peculiar to itself, and in uttering a word, a mistake in the tone would often give a wrong sense. This difficulty is greater in some dialects than in others, because of the greater number of words of which the meaning cannot be determined without the correct tone. Some of the dialects are more polysyllabic in their character, and therefore less dependent on the tones; that is, synonymous words are more frequently combined to express an idea. The spoken language may, however, be more easily acquired than has generally been supposed. Missionaries now commonly begin to preach in little more than a year after their arrival.

Many other obstacles besides the language might be mentioned, but it is unnecessary. It is sufficient for us to know, that in spite of them all, the work has greatly prospered. Already, after only ten or twelve years of active labor, the number of native converts, according to the latest accessible information, cannot be much under one thousand.

The success, however, must not be measured only by the number of converts. Much has been done to prepare the way for greater results. The Bible has been translated in several independent versions. Tracts have been written and published, and circulated in large numbers. A knowledge of the main features of the Christian religion has been extensively diffused among the people, in those places where the Gospel has been preached. Churches have been built. Printing-presses have been put in operation. Schools have been established. The facilities for learning the language have been multiplied. In a word, the whole machinery needed in the successful prosecution of this great work has been put in motion.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE REVOLUTION—CONCLUSION.

In estimating the success of these missions, it would not be proper wholly to overlook the remarkable revolution which has been so long in progress, and which threatens to bring about a change of dynasty, and with it a change of the policy which has so long excluded foreigners from the empire.

This movement is undoubtedly one of the most wonderful among the many wonderful events of the present age. It is not proposed here to enter into the history of this movement, but there are some facts connected with its origin that are worthy of being particularly noted. It is a well-established fact, that the movement was, at the beginning, essentially a religious one, and it commenced, like the Reformation of the sixteenth century, in the breast of a single individual. This individual was Hung Siutsiuen. The impression made

on his mind was by means of a series of tracts, entitled "Good Words Exhorting the Age," prepared by Liang Afa, who was one of the first native converts brought into the church by the instrumentality of Protestant missionaries. He was baptized by Dr. Milne, in 1816. About the year 1833, he was engaged in distributing tracts to the candidates who were attending the literary examination in Canton. One set of these tracts, written by Afa, fell into the hands of Hung. He read them, laid them on his shelf, and thought no more of them. Several years later he fell sick. During his convalescence, he had certain strange visions, in which he received commands from heaven to destroy the idols. A cousin of his, at this juncture, stumbled upon the tracts in his bookcase, and called his attention to the strange things contained in them. Hung read them again, and was surprised to find that the doctrines taught in them agreed with what he heard in the visions. He was therefore satisfied of the truth of both, and commenced preaching against idolatry.

Strange to say, many received his doctrines, and in a few years a large company was gathered of persons who renounced idolatry. Some of them were seized and thrown into prison by the authorities, being accused of

dealing in magical arts, and having the books of "one Jesus." This was the first collision with the mandarins. Others soon followed, and in the end Hung was declared Emperor, and his followers avowed their purpose to overthrow the Tartar dynasty.

Their standard was soon joined by large numbers of men, willing to submit to their discipline, but having no sympathy with their religion. Many of them undoubtedly were the relics of bands of robbers, who had been prowling about the country. The whole province of Kwang-si, in which these events took place, had been overrun by bands of lawless banditti, and Hung was not unwilling to receive their assistance.

In 1853 the city of Nanking was taken by an immense army of insurgents, and is still occupied as the capital of the new dynasty. From this point, as a base of operations, they have been gradually extending the limits of their authority, and now, according to recent accounts, they rule over a territory of fifty thousand square miles, and fifteen millions of inhabitants.

Their success has not made them indifferent to their religion. They call themselves Christians, and there is reason to hope, that some of them are such in reality. The leaders are

doubtless influenced to a greater or less extent by selfish motives; but that they sincerely believe the doctrines of Christianity, is the only reasonable view that will account for their conduct. It is altogether gratuitous to suppose that they are impostors, who, while they at heart adhere to their Chinese views of religion, assume the profession of Christianity merely to promote their own political purposes To denounce all the cherished notions of their countrymen as absurd and wicked, would hardly seem to them the best means of gaining their affections, and thus raising themselves to power.

At all events, whatever their motives, they are proclaiming to the empire the fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion. They declare that there is but one God—who is the Creator of all things, to whom all creatures are subject, and who upholds and controls all things by the word of his power. They denounce all idolatry, and everywhere break in pieces the idols, and destroy their temples. They teach the doctrine of free justification through the atonement of Christ, and enjoin repentance and good works, taking the ten commandments as the basis of their system of morals.

Besides all this, they print the Bible, with-

out note or comment, as they find it translated by a Protestant missionary. They have taken Gutzlaff's version, and print it, so far as the editions have been collated, without any alteration.

Is it possible for any one who loves the cause of Christ not to rejoice in these things? Must we not bid them God speed in such a work? If, as is said to be the fact, they require all their officials to make themselves familiar with the Scriptures before receiving office, we have still greater reason to hope for good from the movement.

We do not say that these men, or any of them, are truly converted; but where so much truth has been made familiar to many hundred thousand minds, there is surely ground to hope that the spirit of God may make it effectual to the salvation of some of them.

There is, doubtless, much fanaticism connected with this movement. The leaders profess to have immediate communication with heaven, and to be guided in their movements by direct instructions from the Heavenly Father. They do not profess, however, to receive any new revelation as to doctrine. They but claim to be under special divine guidance in the conduct of the war. That men who have obtained all their knowledge of Christi-

anity as they have obtained theirs, and whose early training has been under the influence of such superstitions as those which they were taught to believe, should be brought under the influence of fanaticism in receiving their new faith, is by no means strange. The marvel is, that there is not far more of it than has yet manifested itself.

The conduct of these men cannot, in all respects, be defended. Some of their blasphemous assumptions are wholly without excuse. Yet, in such a movement, some extravagances were to have been expected. How far the chief himself, Hung Siutsiuen, is responsible for the language and conduct of his subordinates we cannot determine. Some light is thrown on this point, however, by the fact, that on one occasion he was sentenced by his associate chiefs to receive forty blows of the bamboo, in obedience to a pretended revelation from the Heavenly Father. It is now confidently reported that his prime minister, the Eastern King, Yang Siutsing, has been put to death. He seems to have been the most cunning, if not the most able, of the subordinate leaders, and was probably the most unprincipled.

Whether these men will succeed in placing themselves on the throne or not, no human foresight can determine. Perhaps their mis-

sion will be better accomplished in their overthrow than in their triumph. It can hardly be doubted, however, that the days of the Great Pure Dynasty are fast drawing to their end. In any event, this great movement cannot fail to prepare the way for the spread of the Gospel throughout this mighty empire.

We cannot but recognize in this strange revolution the power of God. We see in this wonderful upheaving of the Chinese mind, how easy it is for Omnipotence to bring about, as it were instantaneously, the most stupendous results. A vast multitude of men, under the impetus communicated by a single mind, have been brought suddenly to embrace, in form at least, a new religion. Educated under the influence of gross idolatry, and debasing superstition, they have been brought, under the leadership of a chief having no greater advantages of education than themselves, to renounce their idolatry and superstition, to submit to a rigid religious, as well as military discipline, and to set themselves against all that so lately they had held most sacred.

This revolution is, to a certain extent, the offspring of Protestant missions, and affords many grounds of encouragement to all who feel any interest in the success of the missionary work.

We have now endeavored to place before the reader some of the facts illustrating the gross darkness which rests upon the minds of the millions of this vast empire. The picture thus presented cannot but call forth the sympathies of all who have hearts to feel for the miseries of their fellow-men. The Gospel alone can deliver these degraded idolaters from the chains of superstition in which they are held. Shall it be withheld? How strong is the appeal for help which comes to us from that far-off land. The poor woman muttering her unmeaning prayers; the ignorant peasant bowing before his idols; the high officer worshiping the ancient sages; the Emperor himself, in his robes of state, prostrating himself in adoration of Heaven and Earth, or of the Sun and Moon; and the populous city distracted by anxious fears of evil spirits, all appeal to us to send to them the Book of God, which can make them wise unto salvation.

Reader! God has put it in your power to give them the means of deliverance. He requires at your hand, not only that you do something, but that you do all you can, to send to them that light of life which he has given to you. You must meet those millions of your fellow-men at the bar of God. Some of them, it may be, might be saved, if you

should do all that God commands you to do. Should any be lost by your neglect, will not their cry of anguish, when driven away from the judgment-seat of Christ, to encounter the horrors of the second death, upbraid you as the cause of their destruction? Will not the Judge himself require their blood at your hand?

THE END.